

# Kegel or Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises for Men

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Prostate cancer surgery or radiation treatment can weaken the muscles around your bladder. When this happens you may have urinary incontinence (lack of bladder control). You may leak or pass urine on accident. Kegel or pelvic floor muscle exercises can help make the muscles around the bladder stronger.

## What are pelvic floor muscles?

The pelvic floor muscles are a group of muscles under your bladder and rectum. These muscles support the bladder and help control the flow of urine.

## How do I do Kegel exercises?

To do a Kegel exercise, you relax and tighten the muscles you use to control the flow of urine. Kegel exercises are easy to do and can be done anytime.

## How do I find the right muscles?

To find the right muscles, try the following:

- The next time you urinate, try to start and stop your urine stream. This exercise will help you find the correct muscles. Repeat this exercise once a week to check whether or not you are using the correct muscles.
- Do not tighten your buttocks or thigh muscles when doing these exercises. Relax your stomach muscles as much as possible.

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**This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

- When you are standing and squeeze your pelvic floor muscles, you should see your penis move slightly.

### **What are the steps to do these exercises?**

- Start by squeezing the muscles for a count of four (4) then relax for a count of four (4). At first, you may only be able to squeeze your muscles for 1 to 2 seconds, but as your muscles get stronger, you will be able to hold to the count of four (4).
- Relax in between each muscle squeeze; let the muscles go loose; do not push down.
- Work up to repeat the exercises for five (5) minutes two times a day.

### **Where can I do these exercises?**

When you first start doing the exercises, find a place where you can do them without being interrupted. After you have done them for a while, you can practice the exercises anytime and anywhere. It often takes 6 to 12 weeks to see results if you do these exercises regularly.

### **Tips to remember:**

Always squeeze your pelvic floor muscles when you:

- Sit up from lying down
- Stand from a sitting position
- Lift something heavy

You can practice squeezing the muscles when you are watching TV, standing in line or driving a car.

### **Are there any precautions?**

- Do not exercise too much. Start slow and increase the amount of exercise. Follow the directions that your health care team has given you.
- Breathe during the exercises. Holding your breath may put extra pressure on your pelvic muscles.