Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Pelvic Floor Exercises for Male Patients

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Pelvic Floor Exercises for Male Patients

Patient Information

Adult Bladder and Bowel Service

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Why are my pelvic floor muscles important?

Your pelvic floor muscles are important for bladder and bowel control. These muscles help to keep the bladder and bowel openings closed to prevent leakage of urine, faeces, or wind. They also relax to allow the passage of urine and faeces out of the body. Your pelvic floor muscles are also important for sexual function. Good pelvic floor muscles help to maintain an erection and may prevent premature ejaculation. Men of all ages can suffer from incontinence or erectile dysfunction. Exercising your pelvic floor muscles may help these problems.

Where are my pelvic floor muscles?

The pelvic floor is a sheet of muscle that forms the floor of the pelvis. The pelvic floor muscles stretch from the pubic bone at the front to the coccyx/tail bone.

Why do pelvic floor muscles become weak or dysfunctional?

- Prostate surgery, for example a prostatectomy or TURP (transurethral resection of prostate), may affect the pelvic floor and its delicate nerve supply. Pelvic radiation therapy may have similar effects
- Poor physical fitness due to a lack of regular exercise or being overweight may lead to poor muscle tone and excess strain on the pelvic floor muscles
- Chronic constipation, prolonged heavy lifting or a chronic cough may also stretch the pelvic floor muscles, their nerve supply and supporting tissues
- Certain conditions, for example, multiple sclerosis (MS), stroke and diabetes may affect the nerve supply to the muscles
- Injury to the perineum (the area from the base of the penis to the back passage) by a direct blow or prolonged pressure e.g. cycling for long periods

Symptoms of weakness

- Stress urinary leakage: leakage during activities such as coughing, laughing, sneezing or sports
- Bowel leakage: accidental leakage from the bowel of faeces, or difficulty in controlling wind
- Post-micturition dribble: leakage of a few drops of urine after you have finished passing urine
- Erectile dysfunction: not being able to gain or maintain an erection
- Premature ejaculation: ejaculation during sexual activity sooner than you/ your partner would like

Working your pelvic floor muscles

- Sit comfortably with your thighs, buttocks and tummy relaxed.
- Squeeze and lift from the front by either imagining you are trying to stop yourself from passing urine or trying to shorten/draw your penis up and inwards.
- Now try lifting the muscles from the back as if stopping the escape of wind. Do both together.

You can do this sitting, standing, or lying down.

When doing this exercise:

Don’t squeeze your buttocks

Don’t hold your breath

Don’t stop the flow of wee when on the toilet

It is important to exercise these muscles in the following ways:

Slowly

Tighten the pelvic muscles and hold tight for as many seconds as you can up to ten seconds.

Relax for four seconds.

Do this tightening and relaxing for as many times as you can up to ten times.

Fast

Tighten the muscles for one second and relax for one second.

Try to do ten of these.

How many times a day should these exercises be repeated?

Repeat the exercises 3 times a day.

Always squeeze your pelvic floor muscles before you do anything that may put them under pressure, such as lifting, coughing, or sneezing.

Pelvic muscles are like any other muscles.

You need to practice exercising them to get to full strength.

It can take up to 6 months.

Remembering to exercise

It is easy to forget your pelvic floor exercises. Make sure your exercises are part of your daily routine – just like brushing your teeth or taking your medication.

You should continue with the exercises for the rest of your life.

- Use coloured stickers / reminder notes in the house or at work.
- Use triggers such as boiling the kettle or waiting at traffic lights.
- Use advert breaks between television programmes.
- Set an alarm on your phone or watch.

- Download a pelvic floor App on your smart phone which alerts you and counts you through your programme.

Healthy Bladder and Bowel

The best way to keep your bladder healthy is to follow a few simple rules.

Drink enough fluid: 3 - 4 pints (2 litres) a day, more in hot weather or when exercising.

If possible, cut down on alcohol and caffeine drinks e.g. tea, coffee and cola.

Eat well: Five portions of fruit or vegetable a day.

Bowels like routine: about ½ an hour after meals is the most usual time for a bowel action. Eating regular meals can help your bowel.

Don’t miss breakfast.

Relax! Don’t strain to empty your bladder or bowel. Sit on the toilet not ‘hover’ above it.

When you need to empty your bowel, go: Don’t ignore the feeling, this can lead to constipation

Never go to the toilet ‘just in case’. Go only when you really need to.

Exercise can help your bowel work regularly.

Know when you should get help. If you leak, feel pain when you empty your bladder or find blood in your wee (urine) or poo - see your doctor or nurse.

Other ways to help

If you are overweight, try to lose weight. Even quite small changes can help with symptoms.

Try to give up smoking as this can lead to a chronic cough.

Contact information

Continence Service

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References

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

www.pogp.csp.org.uk



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