

3 EASY PELVIC FLOOR SAFE EXERCISES YOU CAN DO ANYWHERE

What is the pelvic floor and where is it?

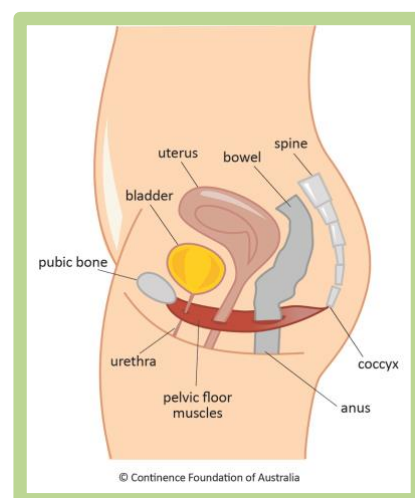
The pelvic floor is a group of muscles that extends from the pubic bone at the front of your pelvis to your tailbone (coccyx) at the back and attach side to side to your sit bones (ischial tuberosity).

Why strengthen your pelvic floor muscles?

The pelvic floor acts as a “floor” to hold up organs in your abdomen such as the intestines, uterus, bladder, etc. The other role of the pelvic floor is to help you stay continent, preventing you from leaking when doing your daily activities. The pelvic floor also plays a role in sexuality both in terms of function and sensations.

The benefits of strengthening your pelvic floor include:

- helping to improve continence (both urinary and bowel continence)
- reducing risk of prolapse
- improve recovery post-pregnancy
- increase confidence and quality of life amongst other benefits



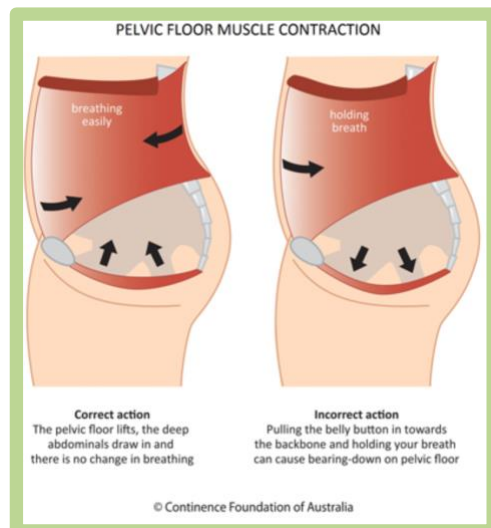
Exercise 1 – Identify your pelvic floor muscles



To help you identify your pelvic floor muscles, imagine that you want to squeeze your muscles to stop the stream of urine or stop passing wind.

You should feel an upward lift around your anus or vagina as you squeeze your pelvic floor muscles. You may want to start doing in laying on your back with your knees bent.

Exercise 2 – Slow pelvic floor squeezes



Breathe in and out. When you breath out, squeeze your pelvic floor muscles for up to 5 seconds at a time then relax for 15 seconds and squeeze again for up to 5 seconds. Do this up to 10 times.

What to look out for

- make sure that you are relaxing your bottom muscles, your abdominals and your thigh muscles
- do not suck your stomach in
- make sure you are breathing normally and not holding your breath
- if you are feeling tired or are having trouble to recruit your pelvic floor muscles, cease exercises and resume squeeze later in the day to allow muscles to rest

Progressing

- building muscle contractions so you are able to maintain your squeezes for up to 10 seconds
- repeat your 10 squeezes up to 3 times per day making sure that you allow enough time for muscles to recover
- try to do these squeezes in different positions such as sitting down, or standing up

Exercise 3 – Rapid pelvic floor squeezes



Once you feel comfortable squeezing your pelvic floor muscles and maintaining the squeezes for 5-10 seconds, it is time to build speed. This is particularly helpful if you are experiencing leaking when sneezing, coughing or laughing for example.

Try to squeeze your pelvic floor muscles as quickly and as tightly as you can for 2 seconds. Then relax for 20 seconds. Repeat this 5-10 times.

You can alternate between doing one set of 10 pelvic floor squeezes and one set of rapid pelvic floor squeezes

To finish off – Relax your pelvic floor



At the end of each squeeze remember to relax your pelvic floor muscles. It might help for you to be in a comfortable position such as being on all fours or laying on your back with your knees bent for example.

To help relax try to squeeze your pelvic floor when you exhale and relax it when you inhale.

The key to success

You need to be consistent to see real improvements in your pelvic floor muscle strength. Try to do daily pelvic floor squeezes for 3 months in order to see best results.

Where can I get help from?

Head over to <http://www.pelvicfloorfirst.org.au/pages/continence-professionals.html> to find out the role that different health professionals can play in helping you with your pelvic floor including Accredited Exercise Physiologist, Physiotherapist, continence nurse advisor, gynaecologist etc. can play in helping you with your pelvic floor.

The advice given here is general in nature and you need to consider whether it is applicable to you and your circumstances. If you are unsure, it may be best to discuss your individual circumstances with your general practitioner.

Sources

<https://www.continence.org.au/who-it-affects/women/female-pelvic-floor>

<http://www.pelvicfloorfirst.org.au/pages/continence-professionals.html>

<http://www.pelvicfloorfirst.org.au/pages/working-your-pelvic-floor.html>