

Pelvic Floor exercises

Description:

These exercises are designed to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles through actively tightening and lifting them at intervals. The exercises can be performed sitting, standing or lying down. A woman can do pelvic floor exercises while waiting in a queue or sitting at the office desk, without anyone noticing. The number of exercises required depends on the woman's existing pelvic floor muscle strength but, generally, she will be required to do the exercises five to six times a day. It may take two to three months to notice a significant improvement. As with any exercise program, women should start gradually, building up the number of contractions and perform the exercises regularly. Achieving muscle functionality when required (eg. when sneezing, coughing, lifting) is more important than the number of repetitions achieved.

Tips

Strong, well activated pelvic floor muscles help support the bladder, uterus and bowel and allow the muscles around the urethra to function properly. The exercises are designed to work three different parts of the pelvic floor muscles: the muscles that control urine flow; the muscles that control the anal sphincter (muscles around the anus) and the muscles that surround the urethra and vagina. The exercises also interact with the deep abdominal muscles.

As some women have difficulty locating the appropriate muscles and performing the exercises correctly, seeking assistance from a health care provider to learn the correct technique is often recommended. If not done properly (if women bear down, for instance), the exercises can further weaken the pelvic floor muscles. A physiotherapist can assist in demonstrating the correct way to perform pelvic floor exercises.

Practical Advice

For more information on pelvic floor exercises, contact:

- Womens Health Queensland Wide
- your GP.

Other Resources

[Women's Health Queensland Wide](#)

Footnotes

Womens Health Queensland Wide - [urinary incontinence fact sheet](#)