Kegel Exercises for Men

The Kegel exercise was named after Dr. Arnold Kegel. It is an exercise designed to help strengthen the pelvic muscles. Kegel exercises may improve urinary control in people with incontinence (leakage). Kegel exercises are recommended after radical prostatectomy to help restore urinary control.

Kegel exercises are performed by tightening and relaxing the pelvic muscles. They must be done correctly and regularly in order to help strengthen the pelvic muscles.

Pelvic Floor Muscles and Support

Pelvic muscles run from one hip bone to the other and encircle both the urinary and rectal sphincters (continence mechanisms). These muscles provide support to help hold your pelvic organs in place. Certain conditions in men may cause the pelvic muscles to weaken. Some of these conditions include being overweight, aging, or having prostate surgery. When your pelvic muscles become weak, you may have urinary incontinence or other problems.

Performing Kegel Exercises:

Kegel exercises can be done anytime and anywhere and you should spend 5-10 minutes per session. You should do 5-10 sessions each day. The exercises can be done while sitting, standing, lying on your back or taking a bath. You may want to keep a Kegel exercise diary. Write down how many times each day you do Kegel exercises and how many exercises you do each time. Do the following:

1. Contract the muscles around your anus. This should feel like you are trying to hold back urine or gas. (Do NOT use your abdominal muscles!)
2. Hold the contraction for a count of 10.
3. Slowly release the muscles and relax for a count of 10.
4. Repeat the cycle again.
5. Do a set of 10 contractions at least five times every day.

Note: always empty your bladder before starting.

Additional Recommendations:

- Quick contractions: After you are finished doing the slow contractions described above, do 5-10 very quick contractions (squeezes). This may help you prevent an accident by quickly stopping urine leaks.
- Remember to keep your abdominal (stomach), back, and leg muscles relaxed during Kegel exercises. You should feel only the muscles between your legs (pelvic muscles), around your anus, contracting. Try not to hold your breath while doing these exercises.
More Information about Kegel Exercises:

- It may take several months after starting Kegel exercises to see a difference in bladder control. You may begin to notice improved bladder control after only 4-6 weeks.

- Do not stop doing Kegel exercises until you have talked to your caregiver. Kegel exercises may be useful for the rest of your life.

- Don’t overdo your Kegel exercises. Like any exercise, it’s important to build up slowly, and pay attention to your body. If you are experiencing pain or discomfort or notice blood in your urine, you are pushing yourself too hard. It is possible that you could strain the muscles and aggravate a current problem, when you are trying to resolve it.

- When you are at the toilet urinating, practicing starting and stopping your urinary stream using the same muscles you have been strengthening with the Kegel exercises.

- Tighten your pelvic muscles before sneezing, coughing, or lifting to prevent urine leakage.