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PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISES - WOMEN

All women from puberty onwards should practise pelvic floor exercises. If the pelvic floor muscles are strong they help to prevent incontinence, prolapses and sexual dysfunction. Women should exercise their pelvic floor muscles regularly especially before and after childbirth, at the menopause and as they age.

Lying

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet and knees slightly apart. Tighten your pelvic floor as if you are trying to stop wind escaping and urine leaking. Hold the pelvic floor muscle contraction as strongly as you can. Try to avoid holding your breath or tensing your buttocks. Perform 3 strong contractions holding for up to 10 seconds followed by a 10 second rest.

Sitting

Sit on a chair with your knees slightly apart and tighten your pelvic floor muscles as if you were trying to stop wind escaping and urine leaking. Hold the pelvic floor muscle contraction as strongly as you can. Try to avoid holding your breath or tensing your buttocks. Perform 3 strong contractions sitting down holding for up to 10 seconds followed by a 10 second rest.

Standing

Stand with your feet apart and tighten and lift your pelvic floor muscles as if you were trying to stop wind escaping and urine leaking. Hold the pelvic floor muscle contraction as strongly as you can. Try to avoid holding your breath or tensing your buttocks. Perform 3 strong contractions holding for up to 10 seconds followed by a 10 second rest.

Fast and slow contractions

Start some of the pelvic floor muscle contractions quickly with a fast contraction and start some slowly with a slow build up of strength.

Whilst walking

Try lifting up your pelvic floor slightly when walking to use the muscles during activity.

'The knack'

Tighten your pelvic floor muscles strongly just before and during any activities which increase your abdominal pressure such as coughing, sneezing, lifting, shouting and lifting.