

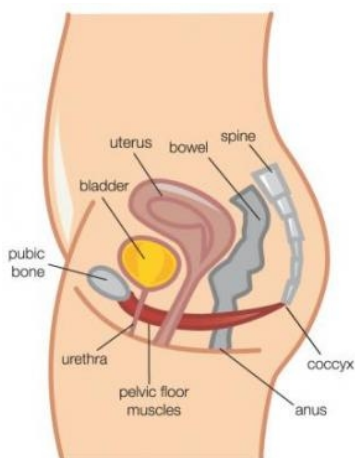


Your important health information

Pelvic floor muscle training

What are pelvic floor muscles?

The pelvic floor consists of layers of muscle that stretch like a supportive hammock from your tailbone to the pubic bone at the front of the pelvis.



What do the pelvic floor muscles do?

- Support your pelvic organs.
- Support your lower back and pelvis.
- Maintain control of your bladder and bowel.
- Enhance sensation and satisfaction during sexual intercourse.

What problems are associated with “weak” pelvic floor muscles?

- Weakness in this muscle group can lead to incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, problems with urinating and/or sexual dysfunction.
- It is important to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles even if you currently do not have symptoms to prevent problems developing in the future.

What can you do to improve your pelvic floor muscle function?

- **Strengthen** the pelvic floor muscles and completing these exercises daily.
- **Use the knack:** Always remember to squeeze, lift and hold your pelvic floor muscles before coughing, sneezing or lifting to provide support and prevent leakage of urine.
- **Reduce the strain** on your pelvic floor by avoiding:
 - repetitive heavy lifting
 - high impact exercise
 - constipation and/or straining when using your bowels
 - keeping a healthy weight

Exercise the pelvic floor muscles

- Move into a comfortable position as recommended to you by your physiotherapist.
- Slowly squeeze the muscles around your back passage (anus) and vagina, lifting and drawing these muscles forwards and upwards. (*Imagine you are trying to stop the passing of wind and urine*).
- Continue to breathe normally and ensure your legs and buttocks are relaxed.
- At the end of each squeeze, you should have a distinct feeling of the muscles ‘letting go’ and releasing.

Your personalised pelvic floor muscle training program

Your exercise position(s):

Your training program:

Your visual/ verbal cue:

Tips to remember pelvic floor muscle training

- Make pelvic floor muscle exercises part of your daily routine.
- Use an alarm to remind you to complete your exercises.
- Place notes or reminders around the house so that you have a visual prompt.
- Consider the use of an online application which has inbuilt reminders. Our suggested app is 'Squeezy' (NHS), downloadable on most devices.

Further Information

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact:

Physiotherapy Department

Mercy Hospital for Women

Phone: 03 8458 4141

Werribee Mercy Hospital

Phone: 03 8754 3150

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