

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 by completing these exercises daily.
- Use the **KNACK**: This specific pelvic floor technique means that you should always remember to squeeze, lift your pelvic floor muscles before coughing, sneezing or lifting and hold them strong 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 body weight

When exercising 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.



For more information

If you have any questions or need further advice, please call us:

- Monday to Friday
- 8:00am to 4:30pm

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In the event of an emergency, please dial **000** for an ambulance or go to your nearest Mercy Health or other hospital emergency department.

