

# THE UROLOGY GROUP

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## KEGEL EXERCISES FOR MEN

Kegel exercises strengthen the pelvic floor muscles to help improve bladder control. When the urinary system is working properly, there are two different sets of muscles working together. As the bladder stores urine, the **bladder muscle** is relaxed. The **urinary sphincter muscle** is contracted to keep urine from leaking out. When it is time to urinate, the urinary sphincter muscle relaxes while the bladder muscle contracts to push the urine to the outside. Urinary leakage can occur if the urinary sphincter muscles are weak and do not contract with enough strength to keep the urine from leaking out between urinations. With regular exercise, however, it is possible to increase the strength and endurance of the sphincter muscles which in turn can lead to improved urinary control.

- The first step is to properly identify the muscle group to be exercised.
  - As you begin urinating, try to stop the flow of urine (without tensing the muscles of your legs). It is important to remember you are doing this step only to help identify the correct muscle group. This needs to be done only once or twice during urination to identify the correct group.
  - It is easy to overcompensate for weak muscles by using the abdominals, buttocks or thighs. These must all stay RELAXED when doing Kegel exercises. You should **NOT** use these other muscles because only the pelvic floor muscles help with bladder control.
  - When you are able to slow or stop the stream of urine, and feel the sensation of the muscles pulling inward and upward, you have located the correct muscles, and are ready to go onto the next step.
- The second step is to begin exercising regularly.
  - Set aside three times each day for exercising. Morning, afternoon and evening are good times for most people, but the important thing is to choose times that are convenient for you so you can develop a routine.
  - **Slow Contractions** – contract the sphincter muscle and hold to a count of 3 (gradually increasing the count to 10). Make sure you relax completely between contractions. Wait 10 seconds after each held contraction before proceeding to the next. Work up to 10 sets for each of three sessions.
  - Remember, in the beginning you should check yourself. You should **not** feel the muscles of your abdomen, buttocks or thighs tighten. If you are not able to relax all of these muscles, you should go back to the first step used for identify the correct muscle.
  - Make pelvic exercises a part of your daily routine. Use daily routines, such as watching TV, reading, waiting at stoplights and waiting in the grocery store checkout lines, as cues to perform these exercises.