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## **TIPS ON PRACTICING PELVIC FLOOR (KEGEL) EXERCISES**

### **How to identify the correct muscle**

1. To find the muscle place your finger inside your vagina or rectum. Try to squeeze around your finger. That's the muscle you want to exercise. This muscle is the same one you use to back gas or bowel movement.
2. Remember! Never use your stomach, legs, or buttock muscles. The most common mistake is using too many muscles. To find out if you are also contracting your stomach muscles, place your hand on your abdomen while you squeeze your pelvic floor muscle. If you feel your abdomen move, then you are also using these muscles.
3. These exercises can be practiced anytime, in any place. Since this muscle is internal, no one can see you exercising this muscle.

### **Doing the exercise**

1. Squeeze the muscle which you identified earlier and hold for a count of 10 or 10 seconds. Then relax for a count of 10 or 10 seconds.

### **REMEMBER IT IS JUST AS IMPORTANT TO RELAX AS IT IS TO CONTRACT THIS MUSCLE**

2. A. Do 15 exercises in the morning, 15 in the afternoon and 20 at night. **OR**  
B. Exercise for 10 minutes, three times a day. **OR**  
C. Exercise using the cassette tape twice a day.

Try to work up doing 25 exercises at one time. Initially, you may not be able to hold this muscle for 10 seconds. However, slowly over a two week period, you will build to 10 seconds holds.

### **When will I notice a change?**

In about 2 weeks, of consistent daily exercise, you will notice less accidents (Incontinence); in 1 month you will see an even bigger difference.

### **Can these exercises harm me?**

NO! these exercises cannot harm you in any way. Most patients find them relaxing and easy. If you get back pain or stomach pain after you exercise, then you are probably trying too hard and using stomach and or back muscles. Go back and find the correct muscle. If you experience headaches, then you are probably holding your breath. Remember to focus on relaxation, as well as contraction of the muscle. In time you will learn to practice effortlessly. Eventually, work these exercises in as part of your life-style, like brushing your teeth or eating a meal. This will help you to remain successful for a lifetime!

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