

Urology

Kegel Exercises for Men



Kegel exercises are considered excellent therapy for men having stress urinary incontinence after a prostate has been removed and for urgency/frequency and urge incontinence.

Kegel exercises were originally developed by a gynecologist, Dr. Arnold Kegel, in the late 1940's to help women strengthen the muscles used in childbirth and to prevent stress incontinence. This exercise routine strengthens urinary sphincter muscle, thus decreasing incontinence.

Finding the Correct Muscles

Before you start a kegel regimen, you need to figure out which muscles are the correct one to focus on. A good way is to sit on the toilet with legs slightly apart and start to urinate. After you have urinated for a few seconds, try to stop your stream without moving your legs. It is recommended NOT to try to stop your stream during full force, but when the pressure eases off. You will have better control at that time. If you are successful, you have tightened the urinary sphincter. It may take more than one try to locate the right muscle group!

Performing Kegel Exercises

Kegel exercises are performed by tightening and relaxing the rectal sphincter, not the urinary sphincter. The rectal and urinary sphincters are very close in proximity. You generally should not feel anything happening at the shaft of the penis. Squeeze the rectum gently, like a pucker, or holding back "gas" or a bowel movement. You do not have to squeeze as tight as you can. You end up using inappropriate muscles when this happens. You may want to place your hand on your abdomen or legs to monitor the way you squeeze. Your abdomen should not move. Breathe normally. Stay relaxed.

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Your Kegel Exercise Program

Remember that kegel exercises can be performed any time, any where. If you are performing kegels, appropriately, no one can see you doing them.

In the beginning, try to perform exercises with an empty bladder. Do not set yourself up to be a failure, you may leak. Start exercises in a sitting position, preferably a hard surface chair, so you can feel yourself contract your rectum. You may perform exercises in a lying position, but bend your knees if in this position. You may progress to a standing position later.

Squeeze the rectum and hold that squeeze for a count to 10 if you can. If you cannot hold for 10 seconds, try at least 5 seconds and gradually build to 10 seconds. Then relax for the same amount of time, at least 10 seconds. One repetition is a squeeze and a relaxation maneuver. Perform 30 Repetitions, three times a day. You may perform more sets but no more repetitions. You may perform 2-3 second quick, controlled, flick type squeezes to diminish urges. Remember the pelvic muscles can tire just like any other muscle. Do not overdo. You may perform more sets but no more repetitions.

After mastering kegel exercises, consider what makes you leak and practice your exercises with a cough, lifting, sudden movements, or sports. Contract your muscles first, hold during the activity, then relax. Lastly, kegel exercises are like any other exercise in that results are not automatic. You should notice improvement in as little as 2 weeks, but generally with 4 to 8 weeks of consistent exercises.