

Kegel Exercises best practices for women



The Benefits of Kegel Exercises for Women with Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is a common problem among women, especially as they age or after childbirth. It can be embarrassing and limiting, affecting their quality of life. However, there is hope for women who suffer from urinary incontinence. Kegel exercises, also known as pelvic floor exercises, can be an effective solution to this problem.

What are Kegel exercises?

Kegel exercises involve contracting and relaxing the muscles in the pelvic floor. These muscles support the bladder, uterus, and rectum. They play a crucial role in controlling urination and bowel movements. Weakness in the pelvic floor muscles can lead to urinary incontinence, among other issues.

How can Kegel exercises help women with urinary incontinence?

By regularly practicing Kegel exercises, women can strengthen their pelvic floor muscles and improve their bladder control. This can significantly reduce or even eliminate urinary incontinence. Kegel exercises can also help women with stress incontinence, which occurs when pressure is put on the bladder, such as during coughing or sneezing.

How to perform Kegel exercises?

It is essential to perform Kegel exercises correctly to get the full benefit. Here is a step-by-step guide:

- Find the right muscles - The easiest way to find the pelvic floor muscles is to stop urinating midstream. The muscles you use to do this are your pelvic floor muscles. - Contract the muscles - Once you have identified the muscles, contract them for three to five seconds. It should feel like you are lifting your pelvic floor muscles. - Relax the muscles - After contracting the muscles, relax them for three to five seconds. - Repeat - Repeat the process ten times in a row, three times a day. Over time, you can increase the length of time you hold the contraction and the number of repetitions.

It is important to note that Kegel exercises should not be done while urinating. Doing so can lead to incomplete emptying of the bladder and increase the risk of urinary tract infections.

How to Perform Kegel Exercises Correctly

Kegel exercises, also known as pelvic floor exercises, can be beneficial for women of all ages. They can help strengthen the pelvic floor muscles, improve bladder control, and enhance sexual function. However, it is essential to perform Kegel exercises correctly to achieve maximum benefits. In this article, we will provide step-by-step instructions on how to properly perform Kegel exercises, including tips for maintaining proper form and avoiding common mistakes.

Step-by-Step Guide to Kegel Exercises

- Identify the Pelvic Floor Muscles: Before starting Kegel exercises, it is crucial to identify the correct muscles. To do this, try to stop the flow of urine while going to the bathroom. The muscles you use to stop urinating are your pelvic floor muscles. - Empty Your Bladder: Emptying your bladder before doing Kegel exercises can prevent urine from leaking during the exercise. - Sit, Stand or Lie Down: You can perform Kegel exercises in any position that feels comfortable for you. However, it is recommended to start by lying down on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. - Contract the Pelvic Floor Muscles: Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles for 3-5 seconds, then release for 3-5 seconds. Repeat this 10 times, and aim to do this exercise at least 3 times a day. - Don't Hold Your Breath: Make sure to breathe normally while performing Kegel exercises. Holding your breath can cause tension in your muscles and make it harder to perform the exercise correctly. - Don't Tense Your Abdominal or Thigh Muscles: Focus only on contracting your pelvic floor muscles while doing Kegel exercises. Tensing your abdominal or thigh muscles can cause incorrect muscle activation. - Gradually Increase Your Repetitions: Once you become comfortable with doing 10 repetitions, try increasing the number of repetitions gradually. However, avoid overdoing it and stick to what feels comfortable.

Tips for Maintaining Proper Form and Avoiding Common Mistakes

- Avoid tensing your buttock muscles, as this can cause incorrect muscle activation. - Don't rush through the exercise. Take your time and focus on proper form. - Use a mirror to make sure you are using the correct muscles and not tensing other muscles. - Avoid doing Kegel exercises while urinating, as this can cause incomplete emptying of the bladder and increase the risk of urinary tract infections. - Consult with a healthcare professional if you have any concerns or questions about performing Kegel exercises.

Kegel Exercises for Women with Pelvic Organ Prolapse

Pelvic organ prolapse is a common condition that affects many women, particularly those who have given birth vaginally or are going through menopause. It occurs when the muscles and ligaments supporting the pelvic organs, such as the uterus, bladder, and rectum, weaken and stretch, causing these organs to drop or protrude into the vagina. While surgery is an option for severe cases, Kegel exercises can be an effective non-surgical treatment for mild to moderate pelvic organ prolapse. In this article, we will explore how Kegel exercises can help women with pelvic organ prolapse improve their symptoms and avoid surgery.

How Kegel Exercises Help with Pelvic Organ Prolapse

Kegel exercises, also known as pelvic floor exercises, involve contracting and relaxing the muscles of the pelvic floor. These exercises can help strengthen the muscles and improve the support for the pelvic organs, reducing the severity of prolapse symptoms.

A study published in the International Urogynecology Journal found that women with mild to moderate pelvic organ prolapse who performed Kegel exercises had a significant improvement in their symptoms, including less vaginal bulge and discomfort. Another study published in the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology found that performing Kegel exercises during pregnancy reduced the risk of pelvic organ prolapse postpartum.

How to Perform Kegel Exercises for Pelvic Organ Prolapse

Performing Kegel exercises correctly is essential to achieving maximum benefits. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to perform Kegel exercises for pelvic organ prolapse:

- Identify the Pelvic Floor Muscles: Before starting Kegel exercises, it is crucial to identify the correct muscles. To do this, try to stop the flow of urine while going to the bathroom. The muscles you use to stop urinating are your pelvic floor muscles.
- Empty Your Bladder: Emptying your bladder before doing Kegel exercises can prevent urine from leaking during the exercise.
- Contract the Pelvic Floor Muscles: Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles for 3-5 seconds, then release for 3-5 seconds. Repeat this 10 times, and aim to do this exercise at least 3 times a day.
- Gradually Increase Your Repetitions: Once you become comfortable with doing 10 repetitions, try increasing the number of repetitions gradually. However, avoid overdoing it and stick to what feels comfortable.
- Don't Hold Your Breath: Make sure to breathe normally while performing Kegel exercises. Holding your breath can cause tension in your muscles and make it harder to perform the exercise correctly.
- Don't Tense Your Abdominal or Thigh Muscles: Focus only on contracting your pelvic floor muscles while doing Kegel exercises. Tensing your abdominal or thigh muscles can cause incorrect muscle activation.
- Use a Mirror: Using a mirror can help you ensure that you are performing the exercise correctly and not tensing other muscles.

The Role of Kegel Exercises in Sexual Health

Kegel exercises, also known as pelvic floor exercises, are often recommended by healthcare professionals for women who experience urinary incontinence or pelvic organ prolapse. However, these exercises can also have a significant impact on sexual health. In this article, we will explore the role of Kegel exercises in sexual health and how they can improve sexual function in women.

The Benefits of Kegel Exercises in Sexual Health

Kegel exercises involve contracting and relaxing the pelvic floor muscles, which are responsible for supporting the pelvic organs and controlling the bladder and bowel. By regularly performing Kegel exercises, women can experience the following benefits for their sexual health:

- **Strengthening the Pelvic Floor Muscles:** Strong pelvic floor muscles can improve sexual function by increasing the strength of the vaginal muscles and enhancing sensations during intercourse.
- **Enhancing Sensation:** Kegel exercises can improve sensation during sexual activity by increasing blood flow to the pelvic region and improving the strength and tone of the pelvic floor muscles.
- **Reducing Pain:** Kegel exercises can also reduce pain during sexual activity, such as pain during penetration or discomfort from pelvic organ prolapse.

How to Perform Kegel Exercises for Sexual Health

Performing Kegel exercises for sexual health is similar to performing them for urinary incontinence or pelvic organ prolapse. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to perform Kegel exercises:

- **Identify the Pelvic Floor Muscles:** Before starting Kegel exercises, it is important to identify the correct muscles. To do this, try to stop the flow of urine while going to the bathroom. The muscles you use to stop urinating are your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Empty Your Bladder:** Emptying your bladder before doing Kegel exercises can prevent urine from leaking during the exercise.
- **Contract the Pelvic Floor Muscles:** Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles for 3-5 seconds, then release for 3-5 seconds. Repeat this 10 times, and aim to do this exercise at least 3 times a day.
- **Gradually Increase Your Repetitions:** Once you become comfortable with doing 10 repetitions, try increasing the number of repetitions gradually. However, avoid overdoing it and stick to what feels comfortable.
- **Incorporate into Your Daily Routine:** Incorporate Kegel exercises into your daily routine, such as doing them while brushing your teeth or watching TV.

Common Mistakes Women Make When Doing Kegel Exercises

Kegel exercises are a simple and effective way to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles and improve urinary incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, and sexual health. However, many women make common mistakes when performing Kegel exercises, which can reduce their effectiveness or even cause harm. In this article, we will discuss the most common mistakes women make when doing Kegel exercises and provide tips for avoiding them.

Not Identifying the Correct Muscles

The first and most important step in performing Kegel exercises is identifying the correct muscles. Many women mistake the abdominal or thigh muscles for the pelvic floor muscles, which can reduce the effectiveness of the exercises. To identify the pelvic floor muscles, try stopping the flow of urine while using the bathroom. The muscles you use to stop urinating are the pelvic floor muscles.

Holding the Breath

Many women hold their breath when performing Kegel exercises, which can increase tension in the pelvic floor muscles and reduce their effectiveness. It is important to breathe naturally and avoid holding your breath during Kegel exercises.

Overexertion

Some women overexert themselves when performing Kegel exercises, which can cause muscle fatigue or even damage to the pelvic floor muscles. It is important to start slowly and gradually increase the intensity and duration of the exercises over time.

Inconsistency

Inconsistency is a common mistake women make when performing Kegel exercises. To achieve optimal results, it is important to perform the exercises consistently and on a regular basis. Aim to do Kegel exercises at least three times a day, every day.

Not Relaxing Between Contractions

Another common mistake women make is not relaxing between contractions. It is important to relax the pelvic floor muscles between contractions to prevent muscle fatigue and promote blood flow to the area.

Relying Solely on Kegel Exercises

While Kegel exercises are effective in strengthening the pelvic floor muscles, they should not be the sole method for treating urinary incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, or other pelvic floor disorders. Women should also seek advice from healthcare professionals and consider other treatment options such as physical therapy, lifestyle changes, or medication.

Conclusion

Kegel exercises are a simple and effective way to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles and improve urinary incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, and sexual health. However, many women make common mistakes when performing Kegel exercises, which can reduce their effectiveness or even cause harm. By identifying the correct muscles, breathing naturally, avoiding overexertion, performing the exercises consistently, relaxing between contractions, and seeking advice from healthcare professionals, women can avoid these common mistakes and achieve optimal results from their Kegel exercises.

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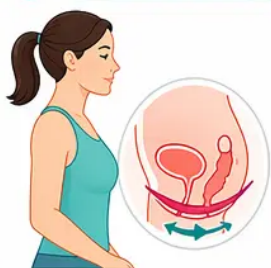
Kegel Exercises: Best Practices for Women

Visual guide to strengthen the pelvic floor with proper technique

Kegel exercises help strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. They can improve bladder control, support the pelvic floor, and promote intimate well-being.



1 What are they?



- They involve contracting and relaxing the pelvic floor muscles.
- These muscles support the bladder, uterus, and rectum.
- Regular practice can improve their strength and control.

2 Main benefits



Better bladder control



Support for urinary incontinence



Better pelvic floor support



May support sexual well-being

3 How to do them step by step

1



Identify the correct muscles (as if trying to stop the flow of urine, only to recognize them).

2



Empty your bladder before starting.

3



Contract for 3–5 seconds.

4



Relax for 3–5 seconds.

5



Repeat 10 times, 3 times a day.



Over time, you can gradually increase the repetitions.

4 Good technique

- ✓ Breathe normally.
- ✓ Keep your abdomen, glutes, and thighs relaxed.
- ✓ You can do them seated, standing, or lying down.
- ✓ Consistency is more important than intensity.



5 Common mistakes

- ⚠ Doing them regularly while urinating.
- ⚠ Holding your breath.
- ⚠ Tightening the abdomen or thighs instead of the pelvic floor.
- ⚠ Overdoing it and causing muscle fatigue.
- ⚠ Practicing irregularly.



6 When to seek advice

- If you have pain, questions about the technique, or persistent symptoms.
- A healthcare professional or pelvic floor physiotherapist can guide you.



Tip: results usually require regular practice and patience.

Based on VitalTracking's article about Kegel exercises for women.

