

## What are Kegel exercises?

These exercises are done to help stop urine or stool leakage. They help make the muscles around your urethra and anus stronger. These muscles are called your pelvic floor.

## How do I find the pelvic floor muscles?

To find the muscles, try to stop the flow of your urine while you're going to the bathroom.

**Note:** Only start and stop your urine stream a few times until you learn how to tighten and relax the pelvic floor muscles. If you start and stop urinating a lot, you may weaken the muscles. Your bladder might not empty fully. That can increase your risk of a urine or bladder infection.

## How do I do the exercises?

- Use the bathroom. Empty your bladder.
- Sit or lie down.
- Relax. Breathe in and out normally.
- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles. Each time you tighten, it is called a contraction. You should feel your pelvic floor or bottom rise. **Do not tighten the muscles of your belly, legs or buttocks.**
- Tighten for 3 seconds and then relax for 3 seconds.
- Do this 10 times for each set of Kegels.



Once you are good at holding for 3 seconds, hold it for 4 seconds. Be sure to relax for the same number of seconds between each contraction. Work up to 10 seconds with each contraction.

Do your Kegel exercises 3 times a day. Morning, afternoon and in the evening works well.

## How long will I need to do them?

It can take 8 to 12 weeks to see improvement, if the exercises are done three times a day. The exercises may help the problem get better. At the very least the exercises will keep the problem from getting worse.

**ALERT:** Call the doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if:

- There is no change in the urine or stool leakage after doing Kegels for several weeks.
- You have special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

**This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.**