



Women commonly experience problems with incontinence, particularly after pregnancy.

The pelvic floor muscles can be stretched in pregnancy and during vaginal delivery.

**The pelvic floor muscles surround the base of your pelvis (keeping your pelvic organs in the correct position) and tightly close your bladder and bowel (preventing urinary and faecal incontinence).**

- Stress Incontinence is the most common type. This is caused by physical stress to the bladder such as coughing; sneezing and exercising that may make you leak.
- Urge incontinence is if you leak when rushing to the toilet. Sometimes leaking can happen with little warning. It may be due to bad habits, or because your bladder has become irritated or because you have lost control of your bladder.
- Faecal Incontinence is leakage of faeces or lack of control with wind. This may be caused by weak muscles around your back passage (anus)
- Being overweight, being constipated or having a persistent cough can make incontinence worse.

**Problems with the pelvic floor muscles can lead to symptoms such as:**

- Urinary leakage, commonly when coughing, laughing and sneezing,
- Urinary and faecal incontinence
- A prolapse which may be felt as general pelvic discomfort or as 'something coming down'.
- Reduced sensation and satisfaction during sexual intercourse, or leakage during sex

Pelvic floor exercises are needed to improve control of your bladder and bowel, help prevent prolapse and increase sexual enjoyment.

## HOW TO EXERCISE THE PELVIC FLOOR

- Imagine that you are trying to stop yourself passing urine or wind, at the same time.
- Think about squeezing tightly inside your vagina. You should feel your muscles 'lift and squeeze'.
- Start gently and rhythmically. Hold the squeeze for a few seconds and then relax.
- Gradually increase the time and repetitions until you can squeeze for 10 seconds, 10 times.
- Try in different positions, such as lying, sitting standing and repeat often throughout the day.
- It is also important the pelvic floor muscles can react quickly to prevent leaking when coughing, sneezing laughing ect. Practise tightening your pelvic floor muscles as quickly and strongly as you can and repeat 10 times.

To be effective you need to practise these exercises at least 3 times a day

It can take several months for the pelvic floor muscles to return to their previous strength, but exercise does help!

## Contact us now

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