



**Kent C. Sasse, M.D.,**  
 MPH, FACS, FASCRS, FASMBS

## ***Female Kegel Exercises***

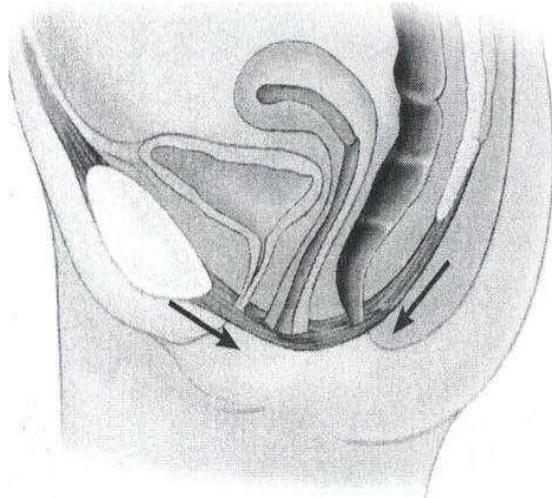
***The following pelvic floor exercises, called Kegels, strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, making it easier for you to hold your urine longer. These exercises can be used in combination with urge reduction techniques to reduce your urge to urinate.***

**Locate your pelvic floor muscles, using one of the following methods:**

Insert your finger into your vagina and squeeze. When you feel pressure, you are using the correct muscles.

Pretend that a tampon has been inserted and is falling out. Tighten the muscles that would hold it in.

Squeeze your buttocks as if you were trying to prevent "passing gas" in public or to hold back a bowel movement.



**Take a stance:** Kegel exercises can be performed when sitting, standing, and laying. It is recommended you exercise in each position every day.

**Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles for 5 seconds then relax for 5 seconds.** The goal is to progress to 10 second holds, followed by 10 seconds of relaxation. Repeat 10 times. Follow with 2 sets of 5 strong, quick contractions. Throughout the day, perform three sets of these pelvic floor exercises.

**Make Kegels part of your daily routine.** These exercises can be performed anywhere at any time. Try to make it routine when you do a daily task such as taking a shower, brushing your teeth, watching TV, commuting, or responding to email. As we all know, habits are formed with repetition.

**Things to remember:**

Do not use the muscles in your stomach, thighs or buttocks. Place your hand on your abdomen; if you feel your abdomen move, you are using your stomach muscles.

Breathe freely and do not hold your breath. Try to talk while you are doing them.

Never do Kegel exercises when you are tired. This muscle is no different than any other in our body. You will not necessarily get the response you want from a tired muscle.

You should start to see improvement, after about 2 weeks of doing Kegels as prescribed.

**Personal Kegel Plan:**

Squeeze and hold for up to \_\_\_\_\_ seconds, then relax for \_\_\_\_\_ seconds.

Sitting: \_\_\_\_\_ /day

Standing: \_\_\_\_\_ /day

Laying: \_\_\_\_\_ /day