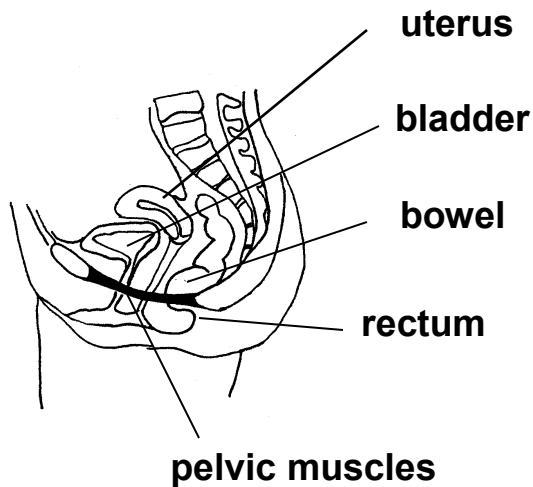


What are Pelvic Muscles?

You can see where your pelvic muscles are in the picture below.



- Pelvic muscles hold your bladder, uterus and bowels in place.
- These are the muscles you tighten to stop rectal gas.

Weak Pelvic Muscles

- Pelvic muscles become weak and sag after having a baby, with little or no exercise or by getting older.
- Weak muscles give you less control of your bladder and bowels.
- With weak muscles you may leak urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or exercise.

Trying to stop and start while passing urine **is not recommended** as a method of strengthening pelvic muscles.

Pelvic Muscle Exercises

When you first start doing these exercises, find a quiet place to relax. This helps you exercise the correct muscles. It may take some time to get the right muscles.

To locate the muscles, it is best to sit down on a firm chair. Then try to squeeze the muscles which prevent you from passing rectal gas.

Try not to tighten your abdominal and buttocks muscles. **Do not hold your breath.** Inhale as you relax your muscles and exhale as you contract.

The steps to doing pelvic muscle exercises are described on the next page.

After you get used to doing these exercises, you can do them in any position and at any time and any place.

Pelvic Muscle Exercises for Women

To do 1 pelvic muscle exercise, follow these steps:

1. Slowly tighten your pelvic muscles over a count of 1 and 2 and 3.
 2. Then slowly release your pelvic muscles over a count of 1 and 2 and 3.
- It is easier to start doing these exercises while sitting on a firm chair so you can make sure you are not tightening other muscles like your buttocks (bum) or abdominals.
 - Once you are comfortable doing pelvic muscle exercises, you can do them lying or standing as well.
 - **Repeat this exercise 10 times to complete 1 set.**
 - **Do 1 set 5 times a day.**

Hints hints for remembering to do your exercises:

Try doing your exercises:

- during commercials when watching TV
- when listening to music
- before going to sleep or after you wake up in the morning

