

FACT SHEET

Female Pelvic Floor

The pelvic floor muscles sit at the base of the pelvis, attaching from the pubic bone to the tailbone. These muscles “squeeze and lift” which allows you to stay continent and to support all your pelvic organs (bladder, uterus and bowel).

To activate these muscles, try the following prompts:

- > Imagine trying to stop the flow of urine
- > Squeeze around the vagina
- > Imagine trying to hold in wind

Make sure that you don't:

- > Squeeze your bottom or thighs
- > Suck your tummy in
- > Grimace your face

Pelvic floor exercises should be a “secret”, no-one should see that you are doing them! Aim to hold a contraction for 5 seconds, then release for 5 seconds. Repeat 5-10 times, 3 times per day. Start in lying or seated positions, and eventually progress to standing positions as you get stronger.

It is always important to make sure you are doing your pelvic floor exercises correctly, as the wrong technique could cause more harm than good. Some people may “trick” by bearing down instead of lifting up. Other people may find it hard to relax their pelvic floor, which could create overactivity in the muscle. It is always important to check in with one of our women's health physiotherapists to ensure that your technique is correct before you start a pelvic floor exercise program.

