

Pelvic floor exercise for men

The Continence Service Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

Lots of men, both young and old, have a continence problem which means they have problems controlling their bladder or back passage.

What causes urinary incontinence?

Urinary incontinence is unintended leaks from the bladder. It can be caused by weakness of the muscles that help keep the bladder shut – these are called the pelvic floor muscles (see figure 1). These muscles can be weakened by a prostate operation, a chronic cough, damaged nerves, being overweight and a general lack of fitness.

Weak pelvic floor muscles can mean urgent visits to the toilet, disturbed sleep due to having to make regular night visits to the toilet and ‘after dribble’ (see section ‘What is after dribble?’) which may stain trousers causing embarrassment.

This can be helped by a special exercise to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles.

The male pelvic region

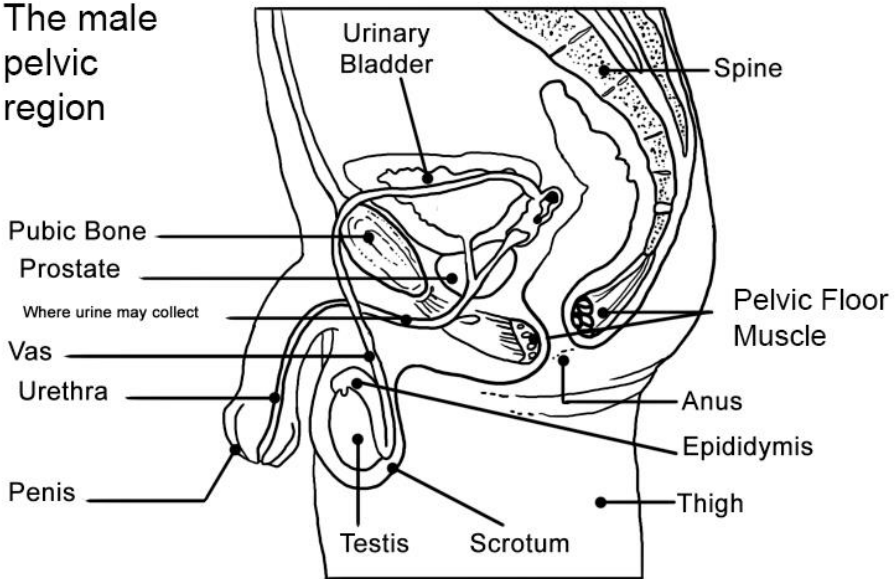


Figure 1 shows the male pelvic floor muscles

Pelvic floor exercise

How do I find my pelvic floor muscles?

Try to imagine you have a build-up of gas in your bowels and you want to prevent yourself from breaking wind. To do this, you will need to squeeze the muscles around your back passage and you will feel your anus and surrounding area lift upwards and tighten. The muscles you use to do this are the pelvic floor muscles.

How do I do the exercise?

Squeeze the pelvic floor muscles and hold for a count of four, then relax. Repeat this exercise four times.

Tips

- Do not hold your breath.
- Try not to pull in your tummy muscles.
- Do not squeeze your buttocks.

How often do I need to do the exercise?

Try to do the exercise five times a day, every day.

The more you exercise, the stronger your pelvic floor muscles will get and so the quicker the improvement will be.

You can do the exercise anytime and anywhere as no-one knows that you are doing it.

How soon will I notice an improvement?

If you do the exercise every day, you should notice an improvement after about three months.

What are the benefits?

- Better bladder control.
- Less need to visit the toilet at night.
- An improvement in 'after dribble'.
- Stronger pelvic muscles may help erections.

What is after dribble?

It is leaking a few drops of urine after you think your bladder is empty and can be very embarrassing if it means that you end up with wet stains on your clothes. It happens when a small amount of urine is still in the urethra, which is the tube between the bladder and the start of the penis (see figure 1).

How can I stop it?

The pelvic floor exercise will strengthen your muscles which should help. In addition, after urinating you can try the following technique before you shake the last drops of urine from your penis:

- Place the fingertips of one hand (three fingers wide) behind your scrotum and apply gentle pressure upwards and forwards to encourage the flow of urine along and down the urethra.
- Shake or squeeze the penis in the usual way.
- Repeat this movement twice to make sure the urethra is completely empty.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

The Continence Service
Brierley Hill Health and Social Care Centre
Venture Way
Brierley Hill
DY5 1RU
01384 321517 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/continence-service-community/>

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 0730510

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0800 0730510 على التلفون **Information Co-ordinator**

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