

# Do you have problems leaking urine when you laugh, cough, or during other physical activities?

If so, Kegel exercises may help strengthen your pelvic muscles to improve bladder function and help prevent you from leaking urine.



## What are Kegel exercises?

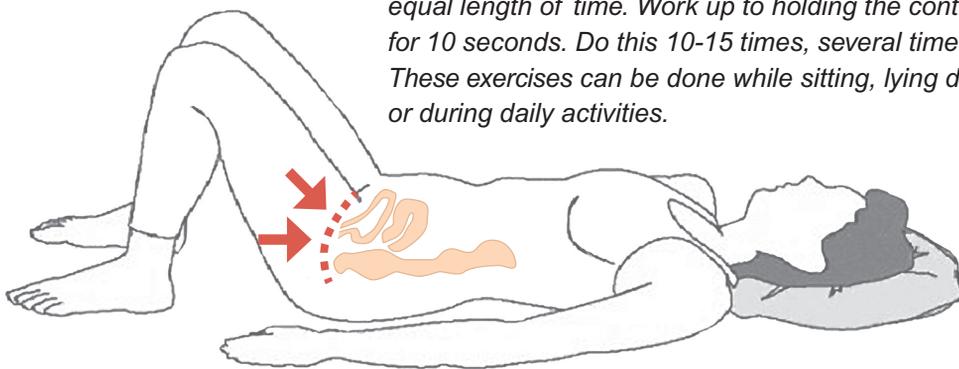
Kegel exercises strengthen the muscles that support your bladder and rectum. These are referred to as pelvic floor muscles.



## How do you find your pelvic floor muscles?

It's simple. When going to the bathroom, stop your urine flow mid-stream. These are the muscles that Kegel exercises will help strengthen.

**Kegel exercises:** Start by contracting your pelvic floor muscles for three seconds, then relax the muscles for an equal length of time. Work up to holding the contractions for 10 seconds. Do this 10-15 times, several times a day. These exercises can be done while sitting, lying down, or during daily activities.



## Tips for getting the most benefit from your exercises:

- Don't contract buttocks, thighs, or abdomen.
- Don't cross your legs while doing the exercises.
- Once you have identified your muscles, don't exercise while urinating.
- Don't do the exercises with a full bladder.
- Ask your doctor if you are concerned about your technique.

# Do you find yourself running to the bathroom to urinate?

If so, bladder training may help. Some people feel an uncontrollable and sudden urge to urinate even if the bladder is not full. Bladder training can help decrease this urge.

## What is bladder training?

It's the process of training your bladder to go longer between trips to the bathroom.

## How do I do it?

### 1. First, complete a bladder diary.

This is a record of how frequently you are currently going to the bathroom to urinate.

### 2. Determine how often you are urinating.

Use your bladder diary to determine your current frequency of urination.

### 3. Set a schedule.

Start with an achievable goal. Figure out the average time between bathroom trips. For example, if you currently go to the bathroom every hour on average, use that same 1-hour interval between trips to the bathroom while bladder training.

### 4. Follow your schedule.

- Even if you do not feel the need to go to the bathroom, try to go.
- If you feel the urge to go in between your scheduled times, practice relaxation or Kegel exercises to reduce the urge to urinate.
- Try not to run to the bathroom.

### 5. Gradually increase the time between trips to the bathroom by 15-30 minutes,

after 4-5 days. Continue to increase the time as you are able every 4-5 days.

The goal is to last 3-4 hours between trips to the bathroom.

Links to additional information and resources may be found at:  
[alosafoundation.org/modules/incontinence](https://alosafoundation.org/modules/incontinence)



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## Balanced information for better care

These are general recommendations only; specific clinical decisions should be made by the treating physician based on an individual patient's clinical condition. These materials were made possible by the PACE Program of the Department of Aging of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Links to references can be found at [alosafoundation.org](https://alosafoundation.org).

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