



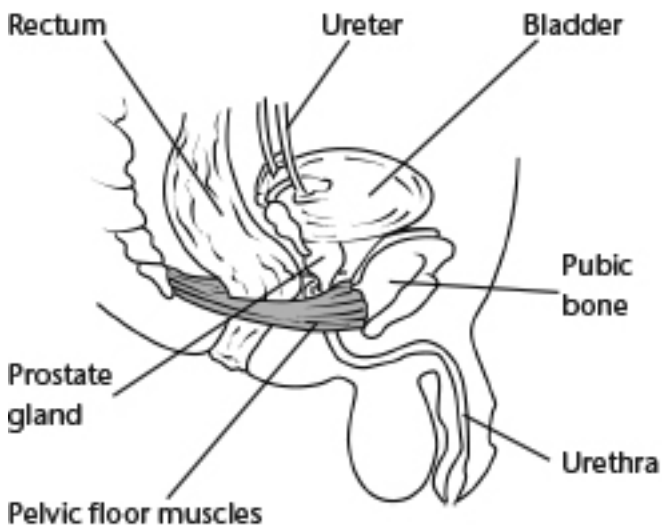
# Faecal Incontinence

Information for male patients  
Physiotherapy department



About 1 in 100 people suffer from the embarrassing condition called faecal incontinence, where you have difficulty controlling your bowel. Your bowel may move at the wrong time or in the wrong place.

### Male Anatomy



Pelvic floor muscles need to be strong and firm. They can relieve symptoms of faecal incontinence.

**Faecal urge incontinence:** failure to reach the toilet in time.

**Overflow incontinence:** severe constipation causing watery leakage from the bowel.

### Causes:

- ❖ Pelvic surgery
- ❖ Continual straining on the toilet
- ❖ Certain medical conditions
- ❖ Diet
- ❖ Lack of general fitness
- ❖ Weakening of muscles as you get older

## PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISES

The basic exercise:

- ✓ Lie, sit or stand with your knees slightly apart
- ✓ Tighten up your back passage as though you are trying to stop yourself from passing wind
- ✓ At the same time tighten your muscles that you would use to stop yourself from passing urine

The feeling is one of “squeeze and lift” closing and drawing up the front and back passages.

This is called a “pelvic floor contraction”.

It is easy to use the wrong muscles instead of the Pelvic Floor Muscles:

- ✗ **Don't clench buttocks**
- ✗ **Don't squeeze your legs together**
- ✗ **Don't hold your breath**

You may feel some tightening around your lower stomach, this is normal.

You can check that you are doing the exercises correctly by placing a finger on the skin over your back passage. Then tighten up the back passage, as if trying to stop yourself passing wind. You should feel the skin tightening and lifting. This is a contraction of the pelvic floor.

**\*\* Do not do these exercises whilst passing urine \*\***

It is very important to make sure you are using the right muscles otherwise there may not be any improvement and you could even cause more damage. Ask for help if you are not sure that you are using the right muscles. Your physiotherapist can help you.

# YOUR EXERCISE PROGRAMME

## Endurance

- ❖ Tighten your pelvic floor muscles and hold them for up to a maximum of 10 seconds
- ❖ Relax fully for 4 seconds
- ❖ Now tighten again for 10 seconds
- ❖ Relax fully for 4 seconds
- ❖ Repeat this until the muscle gets tired

How many seconds can you hold for? ..... seconds

How many times can you repeat it? ..... seconds

**\*\* Eventually aim for a 10 second hold repeated 10 times \*\***

## Co-ordination

- ❖ Quickly tighten up your pelvic floor muscles
- ❖ Hold for 1 second then fully relax
- ❖ Repeat this until the muscles get tired

**\*\* Eventually aim for 10 times \*\***

To strengthen the muscles it is necessary to repeat the slow and fast exercises 4 to 6 times each day. As you get stronger, build up to doing 10 slow exercises and 10 fast exercises 4 to 6 times a day.

## You could do your exercises:

- ❖ After going to the toilet
- ❖ While watching TV
- ❖ At meal times

**To help prevent leakage of urine/faeces you should tighten up your pelvic floor muscles before coughing, sneezing, lifting or with any activity which causes leakage.**

## **GENERAL ADVICE**

- ❖ Perform Pelvic Floor Exercises daily
- ❖ Tighten Pelvic floor Muscles when coughing, sneezing, lifting
- ❖ Eat a balanced diet
- ❖ Drink 1.5-2l fluid/day
- ❖ Eat breakfast
- ❖ Make time to visit the toilet after breakfast
- ❖ Avoid a sedentary lifestyle
- ❖ Tighten Pelvic floor muscles after your bowels have opened

## **GOOD TOILET POSITION**

- ❖ Sit on toilet
- ❖ Knees should be higher than the hips for example on a stool
- ❖ Lean forward with forearms or hands resting on thighs
- ❖ Let your stomach bulge and your waist widen as the bowel moves
- ❖ Don't strain
- ❖ Breathe normally

# YOUR EXERCISE DIARY

You might like to use the table below (for the first 2 weeks) to remind you to do your exercises at least ..... times a day.

## Week one

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

## Week two

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

Slow contractions		Fast contractions	
Hold for:	secs	Repeat	times
Rest for:	secs	Rest for:	secs
Repeat:	times	Repeat:	times



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