Releasing the Pelvic Floor Muscles: Releasing the Pelvic Floor Muscles:  
Reverse Kegel Exercise for Women

IS THIS EXERCISE FOR ME?

- Do you have an unpleasant sensation of pressure or discomfort that feels as if it is coming from your bladder, pelvic area, or genitals?
- Have you been told there is no infection or known cause to your problem?
- Does the pain or discomfort get worse as your bladder fills?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then the muscles in your pelvis (known as the pelvic floor muscles) may be tight or shortened. By learning to release the pelvic floor muscles, you can potentially go to the bathroom less frequently and feel less pain or pressure in your pelvis, bladder, and genital regions.

FINDING AND RELEASING THE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES

The pelvic floor muscles have surface and deep layers. Surface muscles surround the bladder, vagina, and anal openings. Deep muscles support the bladder, rectum, and vagina. The muscles attach to the pelvic bones. For maximum release, it is helpful to imagine you are widening your sitting bones, and moving the tailbone away from the pubic bone.

![Diagram of pelvic floor muscles](image)

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HOW DO I RELEASE MY PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES?

To release your pelvic floor, start by lying on your back and take several calm, deep breaths. Now, when you breathe in, allow your belly to expand out and think of your pelvic muscles as dropping towards your feet (see below). Practice relaxed breathing with a mental picture of this drop and the bones widening to make space for the muscles **at least 3 times per day for 1-5 minutes each session**.

**Pelvic Floor Release Exercise**

HELPFUL HINTS TO RELEASE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES

- When doing the exercise above, consider using the imagery of a circle opening wider. You could also try thinking about a rose blossoming or the tailbone moving or “wagging” like a happy puppy.
- Take time to reduce stress and worry. The pelvic floor muscles can tighten with stress and worry without you knowing.
- Sometimes the simple awareness of muscle tightness can help you to relax and release. Check in with your body frequently to see if you are holding the pelvic floor muscles.
- Sitting on the toilet is a natural time to release your pelvic floor muscles. Pay attention to the feelings in your pelvic floor and pelvis when you are emptying your bladder or bowels. Eventually, practice releasing your pelvic floor muscles while sitting on a chair instead of the toilet.

**Questions and/or comments for your healthcare provider for your next visit:**

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