

Linking Breathing with Pelvic Floor Exercises



Patient Information

Introduction

Linking diaphragmatic breathing techniques (see *Diaphragmatic Breathing leaflet*), with your pelvic floor exercise regime for better results.

Firstly, take some time out to get used to this new way of working the pelvic floor. You might want to practice the breath on its own for a few minutes - this will also help your nervous system relax, prior to doing pelvic floor work.

Breath Recap

Slow steady inhale, your ribs should expand, and your belly gently rise as the air goes right down into the lungs. Then even slower outbreath - try to make it at least one count or a couple of seconds slower.

Linking with Pelvic Floor Exercises

After you have taken a gentle breath in, EXHALE and begin to squeeze and lift the pelvic floor. This should feel like you are stopping yourself from passing wind, then 'zipping up,' to the front to stop yourself from passing urine (See pelvic floor exercise leaflet for more detail)

To start with, work on gradually lifting and squeezing the pelvic floor through your exhale. Release completely as you inhale. Progression: Experiment with holding the squeeze through another inhale/exhale, before releasing on an inhale. Use this technique for your long or endurance squeezes. Remember - the relaxation is as vital as the contraction to a healthy pelvic floor. If relaxing the pelvic floor is hard for you, make sure you are taking a few breaths between squeezes to fully relax (See *Relaxing the Pelvic Floor leaflet* for more information)

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Date of last review: 27/06/2022

Document Ref: 301330

Printed on 14/10/2022 at 12:14 PM

Repetitions - please follow your physiotherapist's advice: Long squeeze: Hold for seconds, repeat times

Quick squeezes: repeat times

This leaflet has been amended and reproduced with thanks to the Royal United Hospital Pelvic Health Team (Author: Jane Flanders, Breath and Pelvic floor Strengthening, Date of Publication July 2021, RUH PHY/043)

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This information sheet is available in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 0300 123 7797 and whc.pals@nhs.net

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We value your opinions which will help us to further develop our services.

If you wish to provide feedback or get involved in our patient participation groups, please email the Patient and Public Involvement Officer at ask.wiltshirehealthandcare@nhs.net or telephone 01249 454386.