

Pelvic Floor Exercises for Prolapse

It is common to feel fearful of the prolapse worsening (vaginal prolapse or rectal prolapse) and the possibility of future prolapse surgery. If you've undergone previous prolapse repair you are likely to want to know how to reduce the likelihood of the prolapse recurring and this is where effective pelvic floor exercise becomes vital in your long-term self management.

Pelvic prolapse can weigh down your pelvic floor muscles, particularly over the course of the day making your prolapse symptoms worse and pelvic floor exercises far more difficult later in the day. There are a number of tips and techniques for reducing prolapse symptoms and for most effective prolapse exercises.

7 physiotherapist tips for effective pelvic floor exercises with a prolapse

Tip 1: Feel your pelvic floor muscles

Make sure you can feel your pelvic floor muscles working correctly before you start your pelvic floor exercise program. If you are not sure about your correct technique how to check your pelvic exercise technique can be viewed on our free complimentary video which can be accessed immediately to the right of this article.

If you cannot feel our pelvic floor exercises or if you are unsure that you are performing the correct pelvic exercise technique you may push your prolapse down and make your symptoms worse.

Tip 2: Exercise early in your day

Perform your pelvic floor prolapse exercises at the start of your day. Try to do a set of exercises before you even get out of bed. This is the time of day when your pelvic floor muscles are fresh and ready to exercise. This is the time they will strengthen best. Try to perform two to three sets of your pelvic floor exercises before midday to get the most out of your pelvic floor exercise program.

Tip 3: Choose antigravity positions

Pelvic floor exercises can be easier for some women with prolapse when starting out lying down rather than standing up. When you stand up, the prolapsed tissue bulges down through the vagina or anus. Using antigravity positions means that your prolapse will not drag down and this should make your pelvic exercises easier to perform. You can choose from a number of antigravity positions; kneeling resting your weight through your forearms, side lying, prone or on your back. AS your pelvic floor strength improves you may be able to progress to sitting and standing positions for your exercises.

Tip 4: Reduce your prolapse prior to pelvic exercises

To reduce your prolapse means to push it back into place before starting your exercises if this is possible. Heavy prolapsed tissue will make your pelvic floor exercises more difficult to perform. Prolapsed bladder or uterus can be very heavy for weak pelvic floor muscles to lift, especially if the prolapse is bulging down out of the vagina. Try to keep prolapsed rectal tissue within the rectum rather than bulging out through the anus and encourage the pelvic floor muscles to support your prolapsed tissues within your body by performing your exercises with your prolapse reduced. This technique makes vaginal and rectal prolapse exercises most effective.



Tip 5: Use Pelvic Floor muscles effectively to protect your prolapse

A strong pelvic floor contraction will help to support and protect your prolapse from becoming worse with specific activities and daily events. Try to strongly lift and squeeze your pelvic floor muscles *before and during* every event that places pressure on your pelvic floor and your prolapse such as: coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose or heavy lifting. Lift and squeeze your pelvic floor muscles after toileting and make this a habit that you perform every time.

Tip 6: Consider using a pelvic exerciser

Many pelvic exercisers are not appropriate to use with a prolapse as the prolapse tends to push them out of the vagina. Smartballs are an award winning pelvic floor exerciser that has been designed specifically for women with prolapse in mind and it is quite unique in this regard. Smartballs single ball design can be used to help promote pelvic floor sensation and strength. Smartballs have a shape and weight that can be managed by most women with mild to moderate vaginal prolapse, making them most useful when performing **pelvic floor exercises for prolapse**.

Tip 7: Consider using a pessary

Your gynaecologist may have mentioned the possibility of using a pessary to support your vaginal prolapse. A pessary device will not make your pelvic floor muscles weak. In fact, a pessary can help to lift prolapsed tissue off the pelvic floor muscles. Women who are successfully fitted with a pessary frequently report that their pelvic floor exercises become much easier to perform than previously without the pessary in place. A pessary is not necessarily suitable for everyone but it may be worth discussing as an option with your gynaecologist if you are interested in this option.

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