

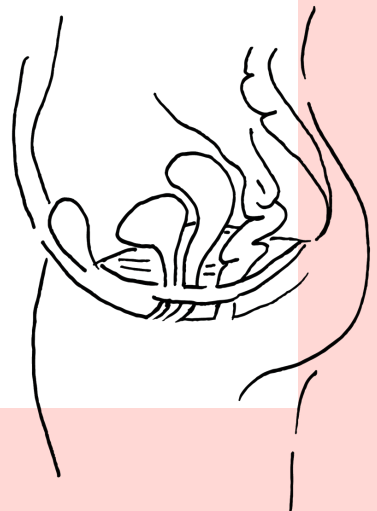
# HOW TO DO A KEGEL ( PELVIC FLOOR CONTRACTION)

## WHERE IS YOUR PELVIC FLOOR?

THE PELVIC FLOOR (PF) IS A GROUP OF MUSCLES THAT LIE AT THE BASE OF YOUR PELVIS. THERE ARE 3 LAYERS OF MUSCLES, THAT FORM A HAMMOCK LIKE STRUCTURE THAT EXTENDS FROM THE PUBIC BONE IN THE FRONT OF THE PELVIS, ALL THE WAY TO THE COCCYX OR THE TAILBONE AT THE BACK. THEIR FUNCTION IS TO SUPPORT THE INTERNAL PELVIC ORGANS AND ASSIST IN NORMAL BLADDER, BOWEL AND SEXUAL FUNCTIONING.

## WHAT IS A KEGEL?

NOW HOW TO USE THEM. HAVE YOU EVER NEEDED TO STOP PEEING MID-FLOW? WELL YOU NEEDED TO TIGHTEN YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES FOR THAT. NOW LET ME MAKE ONE THING CLEAR, YOU MUST NEVER STOP PEEING MID FLOW. THIS CAN SEND CONFUSING MESSAGES TO THE BLADDER AND WELL THEN YOU MIGHT HAVE MORE PROBLEMS THAN YOU BARGAINED FOR. THE ACT OF TIGHTENING YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES ARE CALLED KEGELS. ANOTHER WAY OF EXPERIENCING A KEGEL IS TO PUT THE HEEL OF YOUR HAND ON YOUR PUBIC BONE AND FLATTEN YOUR HAND ONTO YOUR VULVA YOU WILL FEEL YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES CONTRACT AND LIFT AWAY FROM YOUR HAND.



## LET'S GET STARTED

EASIEST WAY TO START WILL BE TO LIE FLAT ON YOUR BACK WITH YOUR KNEES BENT (YOU CAN USE A PILLOW UNDER YOUR KNEES TO MAKE IT MORE COMFORTABLE). BRING YOUR LEFT HAND ONTO YOUR BELLY BELLOW YOUR NAVEL. TAKE A DEEP BREATH INTO YOUR HAND AND A LONG BREATH OUT. NOW CONTINUE BREATHING INTO YOUR BELLY. THIS IS CALLED DEEP DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING, AND IS AN IMPORTANT STEP TO START MOVING INTO YOUR PELVIC FLOOR. NOW WE ARE GOING TO TAP INTO YOUR IMAGINATION. I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE SIPPING A THICK MILKSHAKE THROUGH A STRAW WITH YOUR VAGINA. OR IF IT'S A BIT EASIER I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE YOUR VAGINA IS AN ELEVATOR. AS YOU EXHALE, YOU ARE GOING TO SQUEEZE YOUR PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES AND IMAGINE THE ELEVATOR IS GOING UP. AS YOU INHALE YOU ARE GOING TO LET THE ELEVATOR COME BACK DOWN, OR STOP SIPPING THE MILKSHAKE. EASY? OR NOT SO EASY?

ANOTHER VISUAL YOU COULD USE IS THE CLASSIC BLUEBERRY. I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE YOU ARE GOING TO PICK A BLUEBERRY UP WITH YOUR VAGINA. AS YOU EXHALE YOU ARE PICKING THE BLUEBERRY UP AND AS YOU INHALE YOU ARE GENTLY LOWERING THE BLUEBERRY DOWN. AS YOU EXHALE I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE SQUEEZING AND LIFTING THAT BLUEBERRY, BUT NOT TOO HARD YOU DON'T WANT IT TO POP IT! PRACTICE THAT A FEW TIMES.

## KEGELS DURING DAILY LIFE

IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER YOUR OWN PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING NOT JUST WHEN YOU ARE DOING KEGELS. THAT IS WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO PRACTICE YOUR KEGELS DURING DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SITTING, STANDING, WALKING, COOKING, PICKING UP YOUR CHILD, ETC. DIFFERENT POSITIONS MIGHT TAKE SOME TIME TO MASTER, BUT LIKE ALL THINGS: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!