

## **How to engage your Pelvic Floor muscles**

It is important to get the correct muscles working the correct way, to do this please follow the following cues:

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet on the floor.
- Imagine that you are stopping yourself from passing wind by tightening up the muscles of your back passage.
- At this same time imagine that you are stopping yourself from passing urine by tightening the muscles around the vagina.
- Ideally you should think about **squeezing and lifting** the muscles.
- Ensure that your buttocks and leg muscles do not tighten, and that you are not holding your breath.
- Then gently relax your pelvic floor muscles and rest your pelvic floor for as long as you held the squeeze.

## **Pelvic Floor exercise programme**

You need to practice long and short pelvic floor squeezes to strengthen the different types of muscle fibres within your pelvic floor.

### **Long Squeezes**

For the long squeezes aim to squeeze and lift your pelvic floor for several seconds. Repeat this until the muscle starts to fatigue.

How long can you hold? How many times can you repeat the long squeeze?

**Aim to complete 10 long squeezes, and complete 3 times per day.**

### **Short Squeezes**

Squeeze and lift your pelvic floor muscles strongly and then immediately relax. Repeat this until the muscle starts to fatigue.

How many times can you repeat the short squeezes?

**Aim to complete 10 short squeezes, and complete 3 times per day.**

### **Further info:**

- You should do your pelvic floor muscle exercises at least 3 times per day.
- It is easier to start strengthening your pelvic floor when lying down or sitting and then progress to standing as you improve.
- Pelvic floor exercises are not a quick fix, it is important that you continue your exercises even if they do not seem to be helping initially.
- You should notice an improvement within 3-5 months.
- Further advice is available from a specialist physiotherapist.