



An tOspidéal Náisiúnta Máithreachais  
The National Maternity Hospital

## Physiotherapy Department

### Pelvic Floor Relaxation Guide

#### What is the Pelvic Floor?

The pelvic floor is a sling of muscles stretching from the pubic bone to the tailbone. It supports the bladder, bowel, and womb, helps maintain continence, contributes to sexual function, and provides core stability

The pelvic floor must relax fully so that we can empty our bladder, empty our bowel and have intercourse pain free

It is important to practice release as much as contraction.



# Pelvic Floor Exercises

## Before You Start: Finding the Muscle

Your pelvic floor muscles are internal and do not include:

- Tummy, thighs, calves, buttocks, or eyebrows!

You should feel a lift inward and upward

Do not:

- Clench buttocks
- Hold your breath
- Squeeze legs

Different cues work for different people, experiment with what works best for you

### CUES FOR YOUR PELVIC FLOOR



DROPLET



JELLYFISH



ELEVATOR



STOPPING WIND

## Technique

### Step 1: Getting Into a Relaxed Position - Breathing Deeply (Diaphragmatic breathing)

- Start lying down somewhere quiet and comfortable.
- Place a hand on your chest and one on your tummy.
- Breathe in through your nose and let your tummy rise. Feel your ribs expand.
- Breathe out slowly and let everything soften.
- Try a relaxed count of four in and four out if it feels good.



# Pelvic Floor Relaxation

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## Step 2 : Relaxing your Pelvic Floor (Reverse Kegel)

This exercise helps you sense the difference between a gentle contraction and a full release.

### How to practice

- Inhale to begin
- As you exhale, gently squeeze or lift the pelvic floor once.
- This time as you inhale, bring your attention to the pelvic floor and imagine it softening and releasing. Think: “Relaxing to open the vagina,” “Lengthening the pelvic floor,” or “Softening the muscles.”

### Routine

- Practice for 5–10 minutes, 2–3 times per day, ideally lying down.
- After each gentle squeeze, fully relax.
- Take 2–3 slow breaths, feeling the pelvic floor soften on each inhale.
- Repeat only when you clearly feel the release



# Pelvic Floor Relaxation

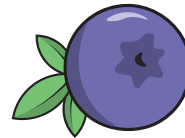
## Visualisation

Avoid pushing down—aim for gentle relaxation

Helpful Visualisations

Choose the image that works best for you:

- Water drop: Inhale and imagine a drop of water hitting a still pond and rippling outwards
- Imagine you are dropping a blueberry/marble that you picked up with your vagina
- Rose bud: Inhale as the petals softly open; exhale as they gently come together.
- Sit bones: Inhale as your sit bones widen and your tailbone floats back; exhale as they come together.
- Vaginal or anal opening: Inhale and imagine the area softening and opening, allowing the pelvic floor to descend.



## General Relaxation Techniques

Tension in the body can influence how the pelvic floor feels and works. These simple habits can help you notice tightness and gently encourage your body to relax. If you have ongoing symptoms or concerns, it's important to speak with a qualified healthcare professional for personalised advice.

### Creating a Calm Setting

- Choose a quiet, comfortable place where you won't be interrupted.
- Lower the lights and remove anything that might distract you.

# Pelvic Floor Relaxation

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## General Relaxation Techniques

### Getting Into a Comfortable Position

- Sit or lie down with your knees bent so your lower back feels supported.
- Lengthen your spine.
- Gently tuck your chin until your neck feels relaxed.

### Body Scan and Gentle Release



Bring your attention slowly through your body, noticing any areas that feel tight or tense.

- Soften your jaw and let your tongue rest lightly on the roof of your mouth. Tension in the jaw often connects with tension in the pelvic floor.
- If you notice any area holding on, imagine it softening and letting go.
- You can use a guided meditation if that helps you focus.
- A suggested video is available by clicking the YouTube icon.



### Practising Relaxation in Daily Life

- Stress and worry can cause the pelvic floor muscles to tighten without you realising it.
- Simply becoming aware of tightness can help you begin to relax.
- Check in with your body throughout the day to notice whether you're holding tension in the pelvic floor.

### Using Everyday Moments to Practise Release

- Sitting on the toilet is a natural time for the pelvic floor to relax.
- Pay attention to the sensations in your pelvic floor and pelvis when you empty your bladder or bowels.
- With practice, try relaxing your pelvic floor while sitting on a regular chair, not just on the toilet.