



Press Release

Everything you need to know about Kegels

DURING a recent study carried out by British company Kegel8, it was found that 50% of women in the UK did not know how to perform an effective kegel. Some women did not know about exercising their pelvic floor until a midwife advised them at the end of pregnancy. However, the body's muscle mass begins to deteriorate and weaken as soon as you hit your 20s. This leaves women – and men – at risk of leaks, uncontrollable flatulence, prolapse and even a lack-lustre love life. Kegel8 has helped thousands of women and men regain control and restore sensation in their lives.

Kegels, known as pelvic floor exercises, help to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. It is much the same as exercising your arms and legs with push-ups and squats. Age, weight, smoking (due to chronic cough) and pregnancy are the biggest strains on pelvic floor muscles, but exercising these muscles is really simple. Pelvic floor exercise can be made part of your everyday routine easily – you can kegel as you wait in line at the shops or while brushing your teeth!

What does a weak pelvic floor mean?

A weak pelvic floor causes a variety of health problems, many of which may not be obvious. A pot belly no diet or gym trip can move, an aching lower back, hip pain, waking up in the night to use the bathroom, and having to wear two pairs of knickers at pilates 'just in case'. If any of these sound familiar, you need to kegel! Pelvic floor muscles support your core, in turn keeping your spine straight, pulling in the tummy muscles so they look flatter and give control over the bladder and bowel – no more leaks, yay!

1 in 3 women suffer from 'laughter leaks' – the affectionate name for stress incontinence. That is around 10 million women, and most will suffer in silence, not even seeking advice from a doctor.

Having a strong pelvic floor is vital for women who wish to conceive. 45% of new mums suffer bladder weakness and they are 1 in 2 times more likely to develop a prolapse than other women. Your pregnancy weakens the muscles due to the extra weight, let alone the trauma to the muscles during childbirth. With a strong pelvic floor baby will be able to enter the world much more smoothly, and with less pain for mum! Plus, it will be quicker to strengthen your muscles after as well.

Does sex really get better?

Yes! And not just for you, your partner will feel the difference too. The stronger the pelvic floor muscles, the more intimate feeling you will experience. Men should do kegel exercises as well - helping to achieve stronger erections the natural way. If your husband is finding difficulty in building an erection, pelvic floor exercise will help rehabilitate the muscles and strengthen his manhood – prepare for a long night of romance and passion!

A Kegel8 study showed 24% of new mums were concerned about pain during sex after childbirth, and 15% were worried about bladder weakness during sex. Similarly, 22% of men were concerned that their partner didn't enjoy sex as much as before and 23% didn't enjoy it as much themselves. Exercising your pelvic floor not only increases your intimacy and pleasure, it helps to build confidence in your performance. The added stimulation helps to naturally increase blood flow to the area, upping your sex drive.

Managing Director and Founder of Kegel8, Stephanie Taylor said: "Whatever your age or level of pelvic health, even if you have had pelvic surgery or not, it is important to do your kegel exercises! I



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founded Kegel8 to enable women to have the confidence, freedom and pleasure of a strong pelvic floor. Once a day is enough to maintain a healthy pelvic floor, so please do not put it off any longer. If you start exercising your pelvic floor today, you will be stronger tomorrow.”

UK Physiotherapist Elaine Miller said: “Anyone of any age can do pelvic floor exercises. Don't do them if they give you pain - see your GP or physiotherapist. Kegels matter because a strong pelvic floor helps keep you continent, have good bowel function and sexual function (not listed in order of importance). Compliance is key - set an alarm in your phone, a reminder on your computer or follow me on twitter @gussiegrips to help you to remember to do the exercises.”

But what are kegels?

Kegels are the exercise of contracting and relaxing the pelvic floor muscles. The pelvic floor is a group of muscles which support your bladder in a number of ways; fast twitch muscle fibres react to support your bladder when it comes under pressure (such as when you cough, sneeze or laugh); slow twitch muscle fibres support your bladder over time – enabling you to hold your urine until you can make it to the loo. Both of these roles are as important as each other and there are two different type of kegels you must do in order to target these muscle fibres; slow kegels and fast kegels. It is important you do not hold your breath when doing your kegels.

Physiotherapist Elaine Miller suggests the 10-10-3 approach:

10 For a slow kegel: Sit, stand or lie down comfortably slowly squeeze your pelvic floor muscles starting with your anus (as if you are trying not to pass wind – the largest area of the pelvic floor muscles are located here), then tighten around your vagina (as if you are trying to hold in urine). Now lift your muscles up aiming towards your belly button. Hold it for the count of 10 and release.

10 For a fast kegel: Do the same movement as before (squeeze and lift) but hold for 2 seconds, and relax for 2 seconds. Do 10 reps.

3 For an endurance kegel: Imagine an elevator over 3 floors. Do the squeeze and lift movement pulling your pelvic floor up to level 1, up to 2, and then 3. Hold, and release slowly.

You may not be able to do the full exercise at first, and you will find the pelvic floor muscles tire quickly just like any other muscle would. Most women find they tire quicker at the end of the day because the muscles have already been working and supporting the body for so long. Therefore, it is easier to do kegels in the morning.

How can I make my kegel exercises more effective?

Kegel8 is the UK's leading brand of pelvic floor toners. If you are starting out, a manual pelvic floor toner will help you achieve the right movement. Doing the exercises with resistance (such as a weighted pelvic toner) makes the movement much more effective. *Kegel8 Cones*, £29.99, are weighted vaginal cones with a unique indicator wand so you can see the results of your muscle movement – now available on prescription or the *Kegel8 Pelvic Trainer*, £79.99, will give you a digital score of your 'Squeeze Scale' – a great motivator and has been described as a personal trainer for your pelvic floor. Not all manual toners give a visual aid to indicate if you are doing your kegels correctly – but Kegel8 does because a bad kegel can strain the muscle, causing more damage.

Electronic Kegel8 Toners are fantastic as they use electronic pulses (Neuromuscular Stimulation, NMES) to directly target the right muscles. Kegel8 devices have clinically proven programmes for particular pelvic floor dysfunctions, from incontinence to prolapse to lack of intimate sensation. An



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electronic toner will activate 90% of your pelvic floor muscles as opposed to 40% if you do kegels on your own. Some are customised for particular use, from medical to new mums or men, and range from £79.99 to £149.99.

Kegel8 Mother Nurture, £79.99, has been designed especially for mums and their journey from preparation, through delivery, to beyond. It has clinically proven programmes to tone your pelvic floor muscles before pregnancy, a TENS machine function with boost button to help through labour (7 in 10 women find TENS to be an effective pain relief) and further programmes designed for new mums, to get their pelvic floor back in shape. When you are looking after your baby, Kegel8 will look after you.

Kegel8 Ultra 20, £149.99, is ideal if you need that extra help or suffer with prolapse already. This is Kegel8's top pelvic toner and has 20 clinically proven programmes, more than any other pelvic toner currently on the market, as well as programmes that can be customised to suit your needs. You can use it with a probe for direct pelvic floor muscle stimulation and exercise or via skin electrode pads on your tibial nerves (found in the ankle) or sacral nerves (at the base of your spine) if you are unable or prefer not to use a vaginal probe.

Find our more at www.kegel8.co.uk.

— ENDS —

Other materials available:

- High Resolution pictures of Stephanie Taylor and products available here: <http://www.kegel8.co.uk/image-library>
- A fantastic infographic of our Mother Nurture survey is here: <http://www.kegel8.co.uk/blog/2014/03/14/pregnancy-sex-our-survey-says/>

For media enquiries or more information, contact Natalie Venning at natalie@kegel8.co.uk

Information for editors

About Savantini

Savantini Limited is the provider of the UK's number one pelvic floor exercise machines - The Kegel8 Range. StressNoMore is dedicated to quality healthcare and wellbeing products for women. With over 20 years' experience, Savantini Limited is the UK's leading health provider for women.

About Kegel 8

Kegel8 was born from the desire to offer support and an alternative home solution to pelvic floor weakness for those who want to avoid surgery, recovery affectively from surgery or are simply too embarrassed to even seek medical support. With a passion for not only our range of medically approved products but for excellent service, support and advice, we work hard to be at the heart of pelvic health and teach all we know to those who suffer the effects of weakened pelvic floor muscles. Find out more on www.kegel8.co.uk