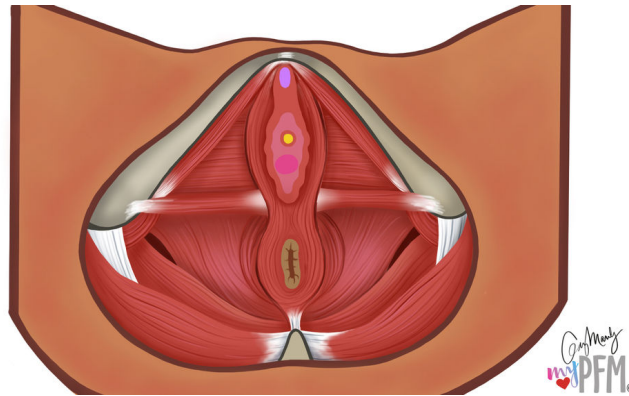


## Pelvic Floor Muscle Relaxation

Charley Peterson, PT, DPT  
Updated 1/10/23

### THE PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES

The pelvic floor muscles are a group of muscles at the bottom of the pelvis, between the legs. They attach to the pubic bone in front, and the tailbone in back. They surround the urethra, vagina and anus.



*Image from MyPFM.com*

When the pelvic floor muscles contract (kegel), they tighten and slightly lift up towards the head. It may feel like holding back urine, squeezing around the vagina, or holding back gas, all at the same time.

When the pelvic floor muscles relax, they soften, open, and slightly lower down away from the head. This can be a very small movement. Do not strain or push down. Here are a few ideas that may help relax the pelvic floor muscles:

#### **Position**

Start in a comfortable position where you can relax your legs and abdominal muscles. Try sitting upright with your feet flat on the ground and support behind your back. Or try lying down however you feel comfortable.

#### **Body Scan**

Briefly check your body for places you may be holding tension. Relax forehead, eyebrows, jaw, shoulders, thighs, and hands.

#### **Breathing**

Take deep slow breaths. Make sure the pace is comfortable for you. Feel your low ribs and abdomen expand when you breathe in, and gently fall when you breathe out.

## Pelvic Floor Muscle Relaxation

Charley Peterson, PT, DPT

Updated 1/10/23

### Visualizations

Different instructions help different people. Not all of these ideas may work for you.

- Imagine the muscles around the vagina and anus softening and slowly opening like a flower blooming.
- Imagine a bowl of muscles inside the pelvis softening and melting.
- Imagine a hammock of muscle between the pubic bone and tailbone slowly lengthening and lowering down.
- Imagine the sit bones slightly widening apart (they do not really move).
- Imagine a line between tailbone and the perineum (skin between vagina and anus) lengthening.

### Stretches

Some hip stretches also stretch the pelvic floor muscles. This may help you feel the pelvic floor relaxing more easily. There are many variations of these stretches that can all be effective. The most important thing is that you feel comfortable. Hold about 5-10 breaths as tolerated.

- Child's pose



- Happy baby pose



- Butterfly pose lying down



*Images from MedbridgeEducation.com*