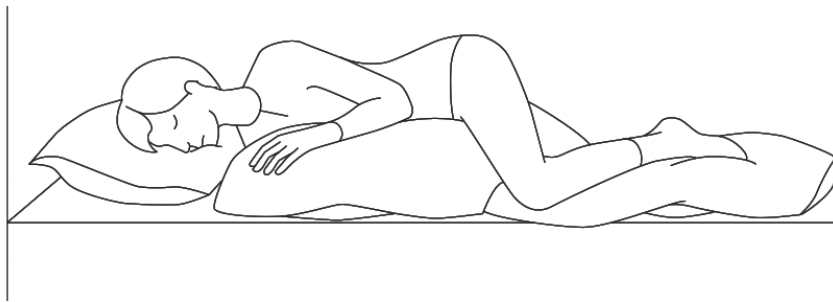


Hysterectomy and Vaginal Repair Advice and Exercises

After the operation

Getting comfortable

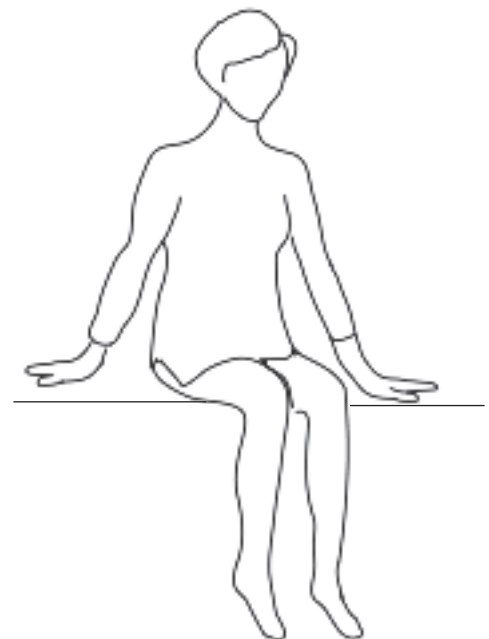
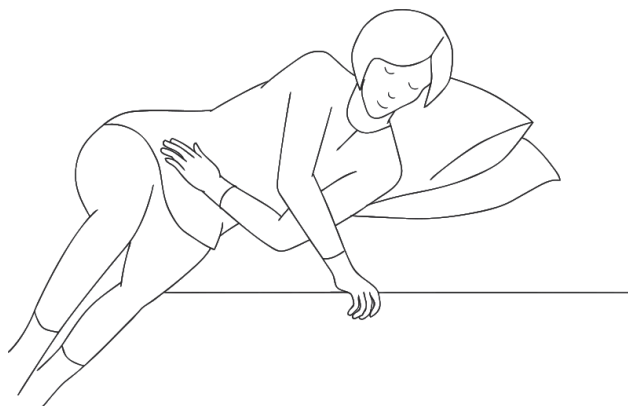
Rest is essential. You may find it comfortable to rest in this position.



When sitting place a small pillow in your lower back for added comfort. Stand tall as good posture is essential, more comfortable and it will also protect your back.

Getting out of bed

Bend your knees and roll on to your side, try to move both your upper and lower body at the same time to avoid twisting. Use your arms to push yourself up into a sitting position, allowing your legs to swing down at the same time.



Circulation

Start this exercise immediately to ensure good circulation in your legs. Briskly circle or bend and stretch at the ankle 30 times every hour and before you get out of bed. Continue with this exercise until you are up and about.

Breathing Exercises

Deep breathing – after an anaesthetic and while you are less active, it is important to use your lungs well.

- Take a deep breath in through your nose.
- Hold for 2 seconds.
- Sigh out slowly through your mouth.

Repeat this exercise three times every hour until you are up and about more.

Coughing – This may be uncomfortable but your stitches will not come undone! If you need to cough then support yourself using the following examples. After abdominal surgery, sit forwards or bend your knees up and support your wound with your hands or a pillow. After vaginal surgery, give support between your legs by applying pressure over your pad.



Early Exercises

Little and often is important - start slowly and gradually build up. Stop if you feel tired or get more discomfort than usual.

Speak to your Women's health Physiotherapist if you are unsure about exercising.

Begin with the following exercises within the first few days of your surgery. These exercises will improve your abdominal and pelvic floor muscle tone which will improve your core stability. They can also help relieve backache and trapped wind, which are very common after a hysterectomy.

Try to do the following exercises 3 – 4 times a day.

Deep Abdominal Exercise



You can do this exercise in lying (on your back or side) or in sitting. Firstly let your tummy sag and breathe gently. As you breathe out, gently draw in the lower part of your stomach. Hold for a few seconds and let go.

Do not move your back at any time and remember to breathe. Repeat 4 – 5 times with a few seconds rest in-between. Aim to build up to 10 seconds hold, repeat x 10.

Knee Rolling



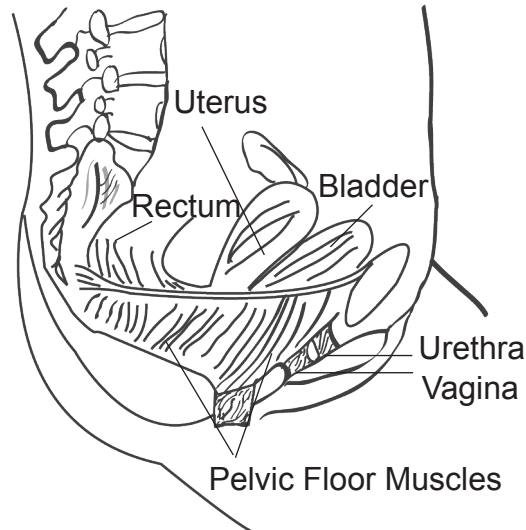
Lie on your back with your knees together and both legs bent. Slowly roll your knees from side to side, keeping your upper trunk still. Only move as far as you feel is comfortable. Repeat 10 times to each side.

Pelvic Tilting



Lie on your back with both legs bent up and draw in the lower tummy muscles. Gently squeeze your pelvic floor and buttocks, tilt your pelvis up and flatten your back to the bed. Hold this for a maximum of 10 seconds then release. Repeat up to 10 times.

Pelvic Floor Exercises



Looking after your pelvic floor muscles is essential – following your gynaecology surgery and throughout life. Initially, exercising them could reduce discomfort and swelling. Longer term, toning up the muscles may prevent leakage from your bladder or bowel. It can also help safeguard against prolapse and may improve your sex life.

The Basic Pelvic Floor Exercise

Imagine that you are trying to stop yourself from passing wind and at the same time trying to stop your flow of urine. The feeling is one of “squeeze and lift”, closing and drawing-up the back and front passages. This is called a pelvic floor contraction.

Remember: You should start gently and stop if it hurts. Do not pull your stomach in excessively or squeeze your legs together, tighten your buttocks or hold your breath.

The Pelvic Floor Exercise Programme

Now that you can do the basic exercise you can build up the endurance of the muscles so that will work harder and longer. Firstly, you need to determine your ‘starting block’.

Tighten your pelvic floor muscles as previously described and hold for as long as you can (maximum = 10 seconds).

How many seconds can you hold for?

Relax the contraction and rest for 5 – 10 seconds.

Then repeat the ‘tighten, hold and relax’ movement as many times as you can (maximum = 10)

How many times can you repeat this?

This is your ‘starting block’.

Now perform the basic exercise but squeeze and lift more firmly, and let go straight away.

This is called a quick contraction and will help your muscles react quickly when you cough, sneeze or lift, etc.

How many quick contractions can you do?

Aim to increase this to a maximum of 10.

You should try to repeat your starting block and quick contractions at least 3 times a day. Your starting block will change as the muscles get stronger; therefore re-assess this every few weeks.

Progressing at home

Rest / Pacing

Rest is an important part of your recovery therefore, be sure to pace yourself. Take frequent rest in between your activities and listen to your body.

Travelling / Driving

If you have had abdominal surgery, then you may find it more comfortable to put a pillow, blanket, etc between your wound and the seatbelt.

Getting back to driving is usually between 4 – 6 weeks but this will depend on your insurance cover and your ability to perform an emergency stop, your ability to twist to manoeuvre and your ability to fully concentrate.

Housework / Lifting

For the first 2 weeks you should be able to lift light loads such as a litre bottle of water (1.1 kg), which will enable you to make a hot drink (only filling kettle with 1 – 2 cups of water) and snacks/ light meals.

After 3 – 4 weeks you can gradually start dusting, small amounts of ironing, light laundry, etc. Whenever you lift, remember to bend your knees, hollow your abdomen and draw up your pelvic floor muscles. It is advisable to leave heavy housework e.g. vacuuming for longer.

You can do a lot of household jobs in sitting, i.e. ironing.

General Exercise

Walking – Start with 5 -10 minutes of gentle walking everyday and gradually increase your pace and time to about 30 – 45 minutes by 6 weeks after your operation.

Swimming – Within 3 - 6 weeks of your operation provided that your outer abdominal wound has repaired fully or your vaginal bleeding / discharge has stopped. Start slow and gradually increase speed and time.

High impact exercise – Aerobics, weight training and running should be left until **at least** 8 weeks after your operation. Ease in slowly and gradually increase intensity and effort levels.

Back to Work

This will vary depending on the nature of your job and the number of hours that you work. Speak to your Doctor or Women's Health Physiotherapist for more specific advice.

Sexual Intercourse

Allow 4 – 6 weeks for the scar tissue to heal. Use of extra lubrication may be helpful. You may feel some discomfort at first but this should pass. If you experience any pain then seek advice from your Doctor.

References

Haslam J. Pelvic Floor exercises in the treatment of urinary incontinence. In Laycock J & Haslam J, Therapeutic Management of Incontinence and Pelvic Pain.

'Fit following surgery: Advice and exercise following major gynaecological surgery' (Pelvic and Obstetrics Gynaecological Physiotherapy POGP)

'Information for you after a vaginal hysterectomy' produced by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

'Information for you after an abdominal hysterectomy' produced by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

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Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو براہ مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"