



Precaution:

Less than 12 weeks since you had surgery:

Do pelvic exercises without using a STIM device.

More than 12 weeks since you had surgery:

Safe to follow this programme.

9. Rehabilitation After Gynaecological Surgery

Many women need surgery because of a bladder, bowel or prolapse issue. In some cases, a woman may have been working on her pelvic floor muscle exercises before an operation.

After surgery you will want to get back to your normal routine as soon as possible. However, gynaecological surgery can have an incredible impact on pelvic floor muscles, with women often finding that they feel weak, unsupported or de-conditioned in the weeks following their operation.

This is partly because the surgical work in the area affects the blood flow, nerves, and surrounding tissues; you will also be a bit sore and less active for a few weeks during recovery.

Doing regular pelvic floor exercise sessions several times a day, straight away after your surgery, will help the healing process by improving blood circulation to the area, reducing swelling, and strengthening your muscles so they can support you.

The next step is to build up good muscle strength and endurance again which you need for secure bladder and bowel control. Exercises will also improve the muscle tone which we need to prevent pelvic organ prolapse, to feel supported.

In the first 12 weeks after your surgery you should do pelvic floor exercises, but as the body is healing and sensations can be altered, it is not advised to use a muscle STIM device. After 12 weeks post-op, the Kegel8® Ultra 20 can be used to exercise the pelvic floor muscles.

Preparation

IMPORTANT: Before proceeding with this condition exercise, make certain to run built-in programmes P01 and P02. These are sensitivity tests to help you determine if it's safe for you to move forward with the following exercise. (see page 19 - 20).

Prog. No.	Screen Codes	Programme Name	Time (mins)	Page
P01	RCV1	Sensation Test 1	30	19
P02	RCV2	Sensation Test 2	60	20

If during the test you notice a problem with sensation, do not proceed. Instead, arrange a visit with your doctor or physiotherapist.

- If no problem, proceed to week 1.
- If worried that there is a problem with sensation, arrange an appointment with your GP or a specialist physiotherapist

TIP: For the first week of your routine, increase the mA until you feel a slight tingling sensation. After this, increase your mA's 1-2 levels every 1-2 weeks. If it becomes uncomfortable, lower it again.

First Month ① ② ③ ④

Goal: “Find and Feel” your pelvic floor muscles

① ② ③ ④ Week 1: Use P03

Features long recovery rests between muscle contractions.

Phase 1: 15 minutes of low frequency.

Phase 2: 30 minutes higher frequency.

- Allow the sensations to come and go in cycles of stimulation and rest periods. Aim to learn where your pelvic floor muscles are.
- Get used to finding a comfortable mA setting.
- Use only alternate days as you get used to the probe.

① ② ③ ④ Week 2: Use P03

- If week 1 has been comfortable, use your stimulation device daily for 6 days, then have a rest day.
- Take an extra “rest” day if at all uncomfortable or irritable internally.
- If your internal tissues are tender or easily irritated, continue an alternate day pattern.

Week 3 + 4 Use P04

① ② ③ ④ Features longer muscle contraction times (8 seconds) with a similar long rest time in each cycle. Four phases to change between stimulation frequencies more often.

- Now help your brain to copy the machine work by intermittently “joining in” with some of the stimulation cycles.
- Try to work your pelvic floor muscles with your mind, drawing in and up when you feel the stimulation.
- Don't worry if you can only join in for the first few seconds. Let the machine do the rest of the work.

Second Month ①②③④

Goal: Improve your muscle (and brain!) skills

①②③④ Week 1 - 4: Use P10

It's time to work yourself a little harder in phase 2 by joining in with the machine more and shorter rests between contractions to encourage your muscles to keep growing.

Phase 1: First enjoy 10 minutes of continuous low-frequency current to improve awareness of the muscle position, blood flow, nerve sensitivity.

Phase 2: 30 minutes medium frequency current to stimulate the fast and slow pelvic floor muscle fibres by contracting for 5 seconds then relaxing for 5 seconds in cycles.

- Join in with some of these contractions, trying to contract for the full 5 seconds.
- Join in for 1 minute, then let the machine do the work for 1 minute or count joining in for 6 cycles, then letting the machine do 6 cycles.
- Use 6 days out of 7 (or alternate days if your internal tissues are sensitive)

Third month 1 2 3 4

Goal: Develop more pelvic floor skills

1 2 3 4 Week 1 - 4: Use P11

This month join in with some of the contractions in both phases.

Phase 1: 10 minutes - focus on the back area of the pelvic floor (as if stopping wind).

Phase 2: 30 minutes - when join in try to use ALL of the muscle, the back area, the front around the bladder tube and even the side walls!

Symptom review

Maintenance or seek more help?

How are you getting on? Compare how you feel now to how you felt in Week 1. Are some problems and worries gone? What's still bothering you?

Not making the progress you hoped? Reach out to one of our advisors by visiting our website:

www.kegel8.co.uk/contactus

Doing well - fantastic - move on to the maintenance programme!

Maintenance

Maintain your results!

Use P05: Weekly maintenance.

A mix of frequencies to maintain fast and slow twitch muscle fibres.

Then use: P20

For pelvic tightness and vaginal tightness, use the vaginal probe with P20 on a very low frequency to help relax your muscles.