



Beth Shelly PT

1634 Avenue of the Cities
Moline, IL 61265
563-940-2481 cell phone
866-761-7464 fax
beth@bethshelly.com
www.bethshelly.com

Why do I leak with coughing and sneezing?

There are several function the pelvic floor muscle must do well in order to stay dry during coughing and sneezing. Noticing the pattern of your leakage will allow you to be more focused in your exercises.

1. Speed – If you leak on the first cough or sneeze it might be because your muscle is not fast enough.

Practice

- Quick squeeze any time during the day
- Work up to 10 fast squeezes with full relaxation in ten seconds

2. Endurance – If you leak on the third or fourth cough or sneeze it might be because the pelvic floor muscle got tired, low endurance.

Practice

- Long endurance submaximal holds – up to 60 seconds at about 50% 2 to 3 times
- Endurance also gets better with strength training (see below) and persistence in exercises 4 to 6 months

3. Strength – Sometimes a gentle cough is no problem but if you have a strong, deep cough the leak occurs. In this case the muscle needs more strength to overcome the greater force of a strong cough.

Practice

- Maximum hold 10 second 30 times twice per day
- Practice in standing

4. Timing – You could have the strongest pelvic floor muscle in the world but if you do not contract it before the cough or sneeze it will not help you.

Practice

- Squeeze before you sneeze or cough – on purpose, over and over. It will eventually become automatic