

## PHYSIOTHERAPIST POST OPERATIVE EDUCATION – GYNAECOLOGICAL SURGERY

### AFTER YOUR OPERATION

- Foot and ankle exercises  
Move your ankles up and down, in circles, bend knees 10 times every **15minutes**
- Deep breathing exercises  
Relax your shoulders and neck muscles  
Breathe air deep into the base of your lungs and feel your rib cage expanding  
Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth  
Take three deep breaths followed by 1-2 coughs  
Ensure your pelvic floor muscles are switched on when you cough  
You can support your lower abdomen and perineum with your hand when coughing  
Repeat 3 deep breaths and 1-2 coughs in 2 cycles **every hour**
- Regular horizontal rest for the first 24-48 hours
- 2 hourly ice for the first 48 hours. This can continue up to 7 days
- At day 3 post op you can use heat or ice for pain relief

### GETTING OUT OF BED

- Roll onto your side and push yourself up using your hands
- Do not strain

### GOING TO THE TOILET

- DO NOT STRAIN!
- Lean forward at your hips and keep your back flat
- Rest elbows on your knees with knees higher than your hips (use a step or tip toes if need)
- Relax your pelvic floor
- Stay in that position until your bladder and bowel are empty
- If you are passing a bowel motion you can wrap toilet paper around your hand and support your perineum for extra comfort

### AVOID CONSTIPATION

- Drink 1.5-2L of fluid per day – mostly water
- Limit your caffeine intake
- Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables to ensure adequate fibre intake(soluble/insoluble)
- 2-3 serves of fruit, 5 serves of vegetables, 4-9 serves of wholegrain cereals per day

### PELVIC FLOOR EXERCISES

- **Begin day 2**
- You should already know how to contract your pelvic floor properly from your pre op assessment.
- Pelvic floor muscles are like a sling that holds up your uterus, bladder, bowel and abdominal contents and helps to prevent incontinence
- Now that your fascial support has been improved it is important to improve the muscle strength that supports the fascia so that you get the best long term outcome from your surgery.

Diagram 1: normal support

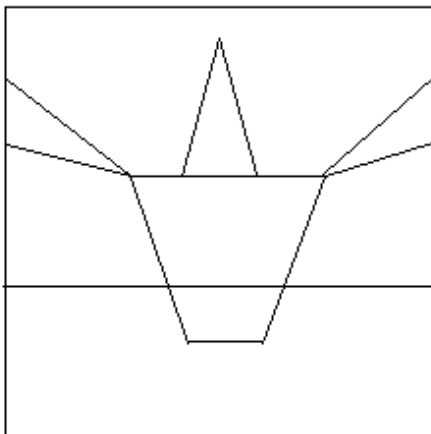
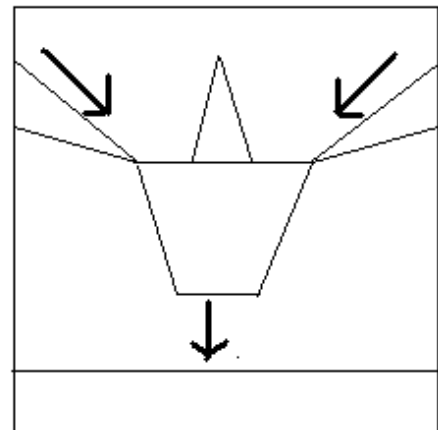


Diagram 2: lack of pelvic floor muscle support



- To contract your pelvic floor imagine drawing up at your front and back passage
- Hold for 3-5 seconds and aim to build up to 2 sets of 12 reps 3 times per day. This is aiming at improving strength and we will look at endurance once strength is under control
- Your Physiotherapist will advise you of the number of reps that is right for you and will visit on day 2 post op to assess that you are contracting your pelvic floor correctly

#### CORE MUSCLE EXERCISES

- **Begin day 2**
- You also should be aware of how to contract these muscles from the pre op visit
- When you contract your core muscles you must ensure you contract your pelvic floor muscles at the same time
- Your core muscles are important in preventing low back pain and supporting the lumbopelvic region when completing every day activities
- These muscles include Transverse Abdominus and Multifidus. Your Diaphragm and Pelvic pFloor also contract with these muscles to produce adequate 'core stability'
- Your Physiotherapist will ensure that you are contracting these muscles appropriately
- Imagine you are pulling up your pelvic floor muscles and also gently drawing in the muscles below your belly button
- Sometimes it can be helpful to imagine you are zipping up the zip on jeans that are too tight
- Aim to hold this contraction for **5-10seconds, 10 reps, 3 times per day and keep breathing.** As strength and endurance improves you will be able to hold this contraction for 30-60 seconds.

#### RECOVERY AT GO HOME

- No heavy lifting greater than 3kg for 6-12 weeks after the operation
- No driving for .....discuss with Dr Onuma.
- Return to sexual intercourse.....discuss with Dr Onuma.
- No running or jumping activities
- Use ice or heat on the lower abdomen or perineum for pain relief
- When coughing/sneezing/laughing always contract your pelvic floor
- Avoid constipation
- No straining
- Drink lots of water
- Keep active within your limits
- Continue pelvic floor and core stability exercises, gradually increasing repetitions with direction from your Physiotherapist