



## Abdominal Surgery, Gynecological Surgery, and Cesarean Section

*These exercises can begin the day after surgery and should continue for 6 weeks or until you are released by your physician to perform a regular exercise program. Perform them at least twice a day for the first 6 weeks.*

### **Diaphragmatic Breathing:**

This enhances relaxation and aids with increasing circulation to benefit the recovery process.

1. Lie on back, knees bent
2. Place one hand on stomach, other on chest
3. Breathe in through your nose, pushing the hand on your stomach upwards toward the ceiling (the hand on your chest should not be moving; this ensures you get more oxygen deep into your lungs, helping to further relax the body). Do this gently as there will be some discomfort immediately following surgery.
4. Exhale through pursed lips, letting the hand on your stomach gently sink inward.
5. Do this for 10 minutes

### **Pelvic Brace:**

This exercise provides support and increases circulation throughout the abdominal area. You should also use this sequence every time you stand up, lift something, or push/pull something. It is also very effective in controlling leakage which can be common following surgery.

1. Gently contract your pelvic floor muscle (imagine that you are trying to hold back gas in order to help ensure you are performing this exercise correctly)
2. Keep the pelvic floor muscle contracted
3. Exhale through pursed lips as you gently squeeze your belly button inward toward your spine (this will be difficult and/or painful at first, so only squeeze as much as is comfortable)
4. Inhale through your nose as you relax your belly and the pelvic floor muscles.
5. Do this 10 times.

If you have further questions regarding appropriate exercises following surgery, talk to your physician regarding referral for physical therapy.

*This information brought to you by...*

**New Horizons Physical Therapy**  
(406) 363-2570 Fax (406) 363-7214  
164 S Third St, Suite B  
Hamilton, MT 59840