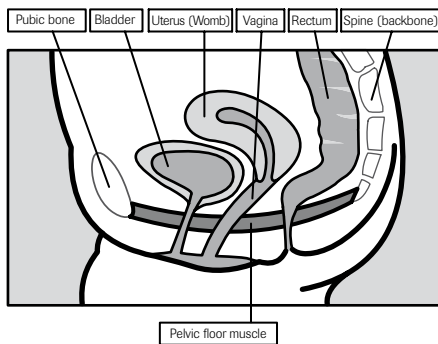


## LadySystem

### Vaginal Cones

#### The importance of the musculature of the pelvic floor

The musculature of the pelvic floor acts as a cradle for the bladder, the uterus and the rectum/small intestine and keeps these organs in their correct position (picture 1). In order for these organs to function correctly, the musculature of the pelvic floor must be healthy and strong.



Picture 1: Pelvic floor in normal condition

#### The factors which cause weakness of the pelvic floor

There are different reasons for weakness of the pelvic floor. Pregnancy and childbirth are the main cause. During pregnancy the increased intra-abdominal weight places a large additional strain on the pelvic floor, stretching it, and this reaches a maximum during birth.

The hormonal changes of the menopause can result in a loss of flexibility in the pelvic floor. Other physical stress such as sports which involve jumping or running (e.g. aerobics, tennis) or playing wind instruments can also stretch and weaken the musculature of the pelvic floor.

#### Effects which pelvic floor weakness can provoke

**Stress incontinence** is a very common consequence of weakness of the pelvic floor. It is the leakage of a variable quantity of urine after a sudden increase in intra-abdominal pressure, which takes place for

example: on coughing, sneezing, laughing, walking or simple jumping.

Also **descent of the uterus (uterine prolapse) or bladder** could be caused by a weakness of pelvic floor.

### VAGINAL CONES

Vaginal cones have been developed as a simple and effective method for the non-surgical treatment of weak pelvic floor muscles and for the prevention of the conditions associated with this problem. LadySystem vaginal cone therapy consists of five anatomically shaped cones, each of slightly different weight, which are used by inserting the appropriate one in the vagina for 15 minutes twice a day. They work while the user is standing or walking, allowing the continuation of normal daily tasks. An improvement in the pelvic floor tone is noticeable within 2 or 3 weeks and the majority of women recover full tone after between 6 weeks and 3 months.

#### Indications for vaginal cones

##### ■ Treatment of Stress incontinence

If already present to greater or lesser degree, this is indicative of a weak pelvic floor and it is advisable to seek treatment before the condition deteriorates further.

##### ■ Auxiliary therapy in surgical procedures

Preoperative rehabilitation of the pelvic floor muscles in patients awaiting surgery, in many cases this can obviate the need for surgery. Used as a post-operative therapy, vaginal cones can improve the result of surgery and help to prevent relapses.

##### ■ Re-education of the musculature post-partum

The effectiveness of cone therapy in restoring pelvic floor tone has led to this technique being routinely recommended as a preventive therapy for all mothers.

##### ■ Evaluation of the condition of the pelvic floor and maintaining pelvic floor tone

Cones can serve as an objective meas-

ure of pelvic floor strength. It is important to carry out periodic evaluation of the pelvic floor, and it is recommended that this is done every six months. The exercises can be re-started at any time if the pelvic floor has weakened again.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

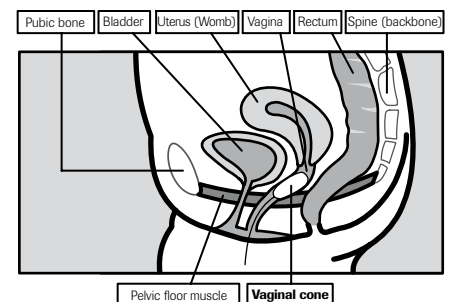
The set of LadySystem consists of five tampon-shaped cones with different weights (4,9 g; 20,5 g; 32 g; 44 g; 55 g).

The cones are for personal use only and should not be used by any other person, in order to avoid passing on infections.

Before and after each use, use soap and water to wash the cone which is to be used. After use, dry the cone with a clean towel before storing in the holder. It is not necessary to sterilise the cones, but if you wish to do so, use a chemical solution of the type used for sterilising baby bottles. They can be damaged if in contact with hot water or alcohol.

Unless directed by your doctor, it is not advisable to use the cones if you have a vaginal infection, during pregnancy, while an episiotomy wound is healing or is causing any discomfort (if in doubt consult your doctor).

1. Begin with the cone No. 1, the lightest one. Insert it smoothly into the vagina just like a tampon. You can moisten it with water to ease its insertion. The cone should be completely inside and nearly vertical in the vagina, with only the nylon cord outside (picture 2).



Picture 2: Correct insertion

When it is in place correctly you should not notice its presence.

2. If you can retain this cone without any effort while standing and walking, for more than one minute, remove it and try the No. 2 cone. Continue in this way, trying heavier cones until you reach the heaviest cone which you can retain without effort (while standing and walking). You should start the exercises with this cone.
3. Retain the cone while you are standing and walking, doing your normal tasks (the therapy does not work if you are sitting or lying down). On finishing, gently pull the nylon cord to remove the cone. You should do this exercise twice a day for 15 minutes.
4. After about two weeks, try the next heaviest cone. If you can retain it without effort, continue the same routine with the new cone. If it slips out, go back to the previous cone and try again a week later.
5. Continue trying to move up to heavier cones in this way. Like any programme of exercises, the therapy should be carried out regularly, each day with the heaviest cone you can retain comfortably without much effort.

After 3 months your pelvic floor should have become stronger, as in the majority of cases, and the symptoms of the weakness should have disappeared.

### Usage Advice

- The first few times you use a cone, or when you change to a heavier one, you may need to make a little conscious effort to contract your muscles to stop it slipping out.

- If you cannot retain the No. 1 cone, try re-inserting it each time it slips out, and try this several times a day for a few days. If necessary, try lying down and gently withdraw the cone while trying to retain it, contracting your vagina to learn which are the right muscles to tighten.
- Before inserting a cone visit a toilet. If you need to pass urine when you already have a cone inserted, remove it first, then replace it after you have finished.
- Regarding the time during which you retain the cone, it should be 15 minutes twice a day, except when advised otherwise by your doctor. Prolonged use will not speed up the improvement. The recovery of muscles always takes a certain amount of time, and you could cause a light muscle fatigue (like an ache in the area).
- The nylon cord is very strong and unbreakable in normal use. If for any reason (for example incorrect insertion) you cannot find it, simply stand upright and relax, and the cone will descend under its own weight and come out.
- If you reach cone No. 4 and can't progress any higher. Not all women can reach the heaviest weight, because not all pelvic floors can reach the same strength. The therapeutic improvement and disappearance of symptoms does not depend on reaching the No. 5 cone, but can be obtained with the passive retention (without a deliberate contraction) of the lighter cones.
- Check the tone of your pelvic floor every 6 months, and start the programme again if you notice any weakening.
- If you have not seen any improvement in your incontinence after doing the exer-

cises regularly for 3 months consult your doctor. The most frequent type of incontinence is Stress incontinence, but there can be other causes (e.g. Urge incontinence) with different symptoms which may require other forms of treatment.

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