

# Toilet Positioning

## Service User Information Leaflet

Produced by: Pelvic Health Physiotherapy Service

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## Aim

The aim of this leaflet is to help you to find the correct position to empty your bowels and to describe a technique to allow the easier passage of stool.

## Why?

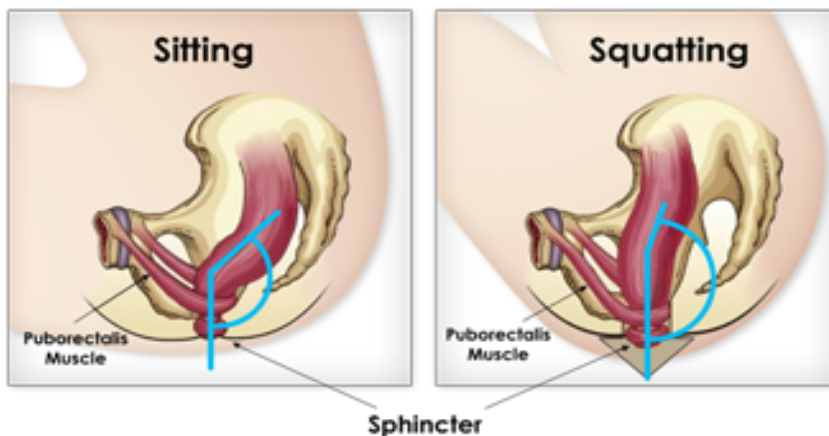
It is important when you open your bowels that you do so in the correct way and in the correct position. This makes it much easier to pass stool and reduces the strain on your pelvic floor muscles.

By holding your breath, sucking in your stomach and straining when trying to open your bowels makes the muscles around the back passage tighten. This makes opening your bowels more difficult and can lead to problems such as haemorrhoids (piles), anal fissures and prolapse.

## Correct Position

By sitting on the toilet in the correct way it can help the pelvic floor muscles to relax and the rectum opens up to a funnel shape rather than a tight bend. Do not 'hover' over the toilet, always make sure you sit down properly and use a footstool under your feet.

## Anorectal Angle



(pictures with kind permission from Squatty Potty TM)

## Use of a footstool

The best way to get into this better position is to put a footstool under your feet. This recreates the squatting position we were originally designed to move our bowels in. Make sure your feet are flat on the stool and that your knees are made higher than your hips. Lean forwards slightly.



Knees higher than hips  
Lean forward and put elbows on knees  
Bulge abdomen  
Straighten spine

(pictures with kind permission from Squatty Potty TM)

## Brace and Bulge Technique

Breathe in, then as you breathe out , try to either make a sound in your throat, for example say the word 'Idge' or 'Ooo'. Or pretend you are blowing a balloon up but don't actually blow out air.

You should be aware of a gentle dropping of your pelvic floor muscles.

You should aim to do this every time you start to open your bowels.

These techniques take time to learn but they should help with your bowel problems.

## Further Information

POGP leaflet <https://pogp.csp.org.uk/publications/pelvic-organ-prolapse-physiotherapy-guide-women>

POGP leaflet on Bowel Dysfunction <https://pogp.csp.org.uk/publications/improving-your-bowel-function>