

# Biofeedback for Pelvic floor muscle (PFM) training

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Biofeedback is a term referring to a group of techniques used to increase your awareness of your body. There are many types of biofeedback. Some require machines or devices and some do not. The PFM is inside the body and difficult to feel. Sometimes it feels like there is a very strong contraction but biofeedback shows it is not strong and sometimes we feel like it is a very small contraction but biofeedback shows it is contracting well. In all cases these techniques are helpful in learning how to contract and relax the muscle correctly.

## Biofeedback without machines

Looking at the PFM or touching the PFM on the outside of the body or inside the vagina or rectum can give you more information about how the muscle is contracting and relaxing. [click here for more information](#) (make this a link to the file "exercise the floor of your core"). These techniques can help but are sometimes not sensitive enough to show the entire story.

## Simple devices for biofeedback

Vaginal weights and pressure biofeedback are simple devices which can display the PFM activity. These are only useful when the muscle is weak and needs more strength. They are not recommended for patients with PFM spasm or pain. Vaginal weights are placed inside the vaginal and can be ordered from many locations. Feedback comes when the muscle relaxes and the weight slips down encouraging a stronger contraction to prevent it falling out. [Click here for more information on vaginal weights](#). (make this a link to the file "vaginal weights")



Pressure biofeedback is modeled after the original device Dr Arnold Kegel used in the 1940s. A pressure probe is placed inside the vagina and a display shows when the muscle is contraction.

This device is ordered with a physical therapist's recommendation. Ask your physical therapist if



you are interested.

Both types of simple biofeedback devices can be cheated and require skilled training to perform correctly.

## More types of biofeedback

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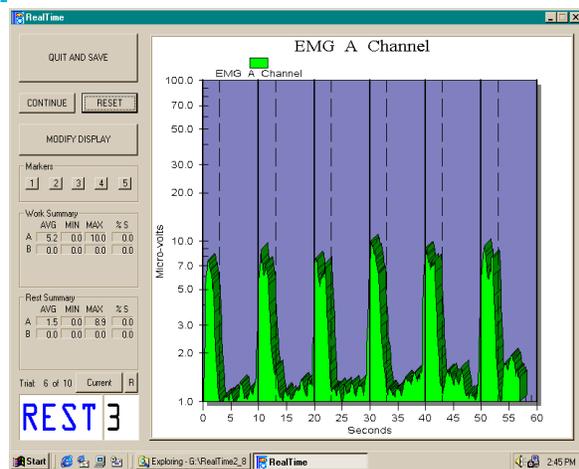
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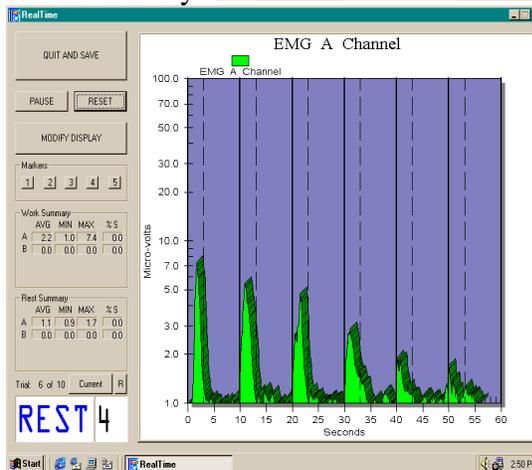
Most people think of EMG biofeedback when considering PFMs. This device displays the activity of the muscle on the computer screen and provides much more information than the simple devices. It helps the patient and the therapist understand the muscle better and tailor the treatment better. This device requires a sensor that is inserted inside the vagina or rectum or sticky patches attached to the outside of the rectum. Your therapist will know which is best for



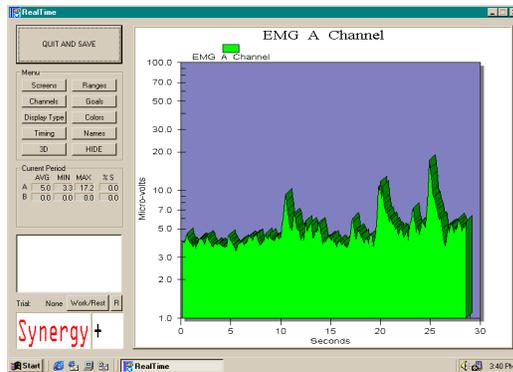
your condition.



The machine can show a normal muscle activity



Or it might show a weak muscle



Or even a muscle that is in spasm

Patient train with the machine in the office each session to learn the best technique and know what they must do at home to improve the muscle function. This type of training is called "Neuromuscular re-education" as we are teaching the muscle the proper technique. Some patients require home trainers but many can learn the techniques in the office and do them well at home. Neuromuscular re-education is always combined with other treatments to have the best success.

Another form of biofeedback is the imaging ultrasound. This shows a picture of the PFM affect on the bladder. A PFM contraction should lift the bladder upward. This information also helps to improve the muscles ability to contract and strengthen.

## Biofeedback for other reasons

Biofeedback can be used to enhance your ability to relax your entire body. Hand warming is a technique used to increase blood flow to the hands and it has been shown to result in relaxation of the entire body. Whole body relaxation is helpful in chronic pain conditions and situation where stress increases urine leakage. Temperature biofeedback can help you learn hand warming. These devices can be ordered in many places. (make a link to the Amazon link for the temperature feedback).