

PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT PESSARIES

Your provider has indicated that you might benefit from wearing a pessary to improve pelvic support and/or urinary incontinence. Pessaries are silicone devices which are worn vaginally. Once fitted, many women can insert and remove them without difficulty at home.

An appointment for pessary fitting will take approximately 1/2 hour and is covered with your usual co-pay. In order for the pessary to be effective, it must be very comfortable to wear, and must stay in place during activities of daily living such as bending, coughing and straining. Also you must be able to empty your bladder without difficulty while wearing the pessary.

What is a pessary?

A pessary is a non-surgical vaginal device used to relieve symptoms of poor vaginal wall support causing a cystocele, rectocele or uterine prolapse. It can also be used as a treatment for urinary incontinence. A properly fit pessary should never cause pain or discomfort, you should not be aware of the pessary. Most pessaries are made of silicone and don't cause infections or allergies.

A pessary should be removed at least every 2 weeks overnight, washing the pessary well with soap and water. Do not use powders or strong detergents. Most pessaries should usually be removed for intercourse. Use either estrogen cream if you have it or a water-based lubricant such as KY or Astroglide to aid in insertion. You may remove it more frequently if you develop an odor. A slight increase in vaginal discharge is not unusual.

If the pessary comes out unexpectedly, simply clean it and reinsert it. If this is a persistent problem then call to schedule a refitting. It is not uncommon for the pessary to come out while having a bowel movement. If this occurs, try to wait to insert the pessary until having a bowel movement in the morning. Also be sure to avoid constipation and straining. Various fiber supplements to prevent constipation include Fiber Tablets 2-6 per day-start with 2 at breakfast and increase as tolerated. Others products are whole psyllium husks, Metamucil or Citrucel.

Please let us know if you develop any difficulty emptying your bladder, or develop worsening leaking while using your pessary.