

Blue Ridge Urogynecology

Pessary Information and Care

A Pessary is a device placed in your vagina to support the uterus, bowel, and bladder when these organs are prolapsed (falling from the vagina). It can also be used to help relieve some types of urinary incontinence (leaking).

You have been fitted today with a _____ pessary in size _____. You will need to return in _____ to see if the size is right for you.

Removing and Reinserting your Pessary

Ideally, your pessary should be removed for cleaning once per week. If possible, sleep without it one night per week. Rinse it with plain water. Avoid exposing it to chemicals including soap as this may cause vaginal skin irritation if not rinsed thoroughly. You may remove it for sexual intercourse or bowel movements if you prefer.

To Remove:

- The pessary will be easier to remove and replace when your bladder is empty.
- You can sit on the toilet or stand with one foot placed on the toilet or tub.
- Open your legs and insert one finger into your vagina until you feel the pessary. You may bear down to push the pessary toward the opening of the vagina.
- Pinch or grasp the rim of the pessary and pull gently. Expect the pessary to fold or flex on its way out of the vagina.
- Rinse it clean with water
- If you are having difficulty reaching your pessary, consider tying a strong thread or a piece of unflavored dental floss (or fishing line) around the rim, through a hole. Pulling down on the string helps bring the pessary into grasping range. Keep the string tucked into the vagina so that it does not become soiled.

To reinsert:

- Empty your bladder. You can sit on the toilet or stand with one foot placed on the toilet.
- Fold the pessary in half and place a small amount of Estrogen cream or water based lubricant (such as KY Jelly) on one edge of the pessary. If this makes the pessary too slippery to handle, consider placing the lubricant or estrogen at the opening of the vagina instead of the pessary
- Push the pessary inward and slightly down toward the small of your back, letting it open into your vagina.
- Use your finger to push it as far as it will comfortably go. It should be positioned behind your pubic bone. Ring pessaries (without knob) should be turned in the vagina ¼ turn.

What to report to your Doctor if:

- Discomfort, you should not feel the pessary
- Vaginal discharge that is bloody or foul smelling
- Vaginal burning or itching
- Difficulty in emptying your bladder or bowels since using your pessary
- If the pessary falls out, clean it with soap and water and place it in a plastic baggie and schedule a follow-up appointment to either be refitted with a different size or shape pessary, or to discuss alternative treatment options.