

Patient's Instructions

What is a pessary?

A pessary is a device that is placed into the vagina to support the uterus or bladder and rectum. The pessary device is a firm ring that presses against the wall of the vagina and urethra to help decrease urinary leakage. The pessary size is determined by the physician after a pelvic exam has been performed and a fitting kit has been used.

If you have sensations of pressure or rubbing with continued wear of the pessary, or if you notice any unusual vaginal bleeding or spotting, call your health care provider immediately. It is not unusual to have to change the shape or size of the pessary after the initial fitting or even after continued wear. This is why it is very important to keep your scheduled appointments. You may notice an increase in vaginal discharge or secretions with pessary use. However, the pessary is made out of silicon rubber and is unable to absorb odors and secretions.

Caring for your pessary is easy. Pessaries can be left in place for a week at a time and then removed for periodic cleaning. Some women choose to remove their pessary nightly before bed and replace it in the morning. It can also be left in during intercourse if this is comfortable for you.

Inserting your pessary

Wash your hands

The notches inside the open ring and the openings in the ring-with-support are flexible points. Grasp the device midway between these points and fold the pessary in half. The curved part should be facing the ceiling. Put a small amount of water-soluble lubricant, such as KY jelly, on the insertion edge.

Hold the folded pessary in one hand and spread the lips of your vagina with the other hand. Gently push the pessary as far back into the vagina as it will go. You can squatting, standing with one leg propped on the tub or toilet, or sitting with your feet propped up.

Removing the pessary

Wash your hands

Find the rim of the pessary just under the pubic bone at the front edge of your vagina. Locate the notch or opening and hook your finger under or over the rim.

Tilt the pessary slightly, to about a 30 degree angle and gently pull down and out of the vagina. If you fold the pessary somewhat, it will be easier to remove.

Bearing down, as if you were having a bowel movement, can help push the rim of the pessary forward so you can grasp it easier.