

Wyre Forest Health Partnership Pessary Information

Pessary Information

Please read the following information. It is important and will help answer any questions you have if you have any problems or concerns with your new pessary.

What is a pessary?

A vaginal pessary is a soft, flexible device made from silicone, latex or vinyl that is placed in the vagina to help symptoms of pelvic organ prolapse. The devices come in all shapes and sizes. The pessary you have has been fitted with will be specific for you.

What is a prolapse?

This is a condition where the female organs (womb, bladder & bowel) protrude into the vagina. These organs are normally held in place by ligaments and muscles, known as the pelvic floor. The pelvic floor in women can weaken for many reasons, allowing the female organs to prolapse into the vagina. It is extremely common condition and is not life threatening.

Why have I been fitted with a pessary?

Pessary management can improve the symptoms associated with a prolapse which can include the following:

- A feeling of 'something coming down'
- A lump
- Urinary frequency and urinary leakage
- A dragging discomfort in the low back

An example of a ring pessary



How do I look after my pessary?

It is very important to look after the vaginal skin. Vaginal hormone therapy is usually recommended alongside pessary management. Avoid constipation. Your pessary normally needs changing every 6 months unless you have been told otherwise.

When you return to have your pessary changed, we will remove your current pessary and check your vagina before inserting a new pessary for you.

It is important to come to all your appointments.

What happens if my pessary falls out?

It is not unusual for your pessary to fall out, particularly if it is newly fitted, and when straining to empty your bowels. There is no need to panic, but ring the surgery reception and ask for a follow up appointment with whoever fitted the pessary or anyone else trained at inserting pessaries at the practice.

What do I do if I have bleeding from the vagina?

Don't panic. It can be common to get some bleeding when using pessary's as the skin in the vagina becomes thinner, particularly as you age. It is advisable to make an appointment.

What do I do if the pessary comes down or I can feel it when I wipe myself?

It is perfectly safe to push the pessary up if it comes down. It isn't unusual to feel the end of the pessary when you wipe yourself, especially if you are on the toilet. If you are having to push the pessary up many times a day, it is advisable to book an appointment.

What do I do if I have discharge?

Vaginal discharge is normal when wearing a pessary. We advise you to wear a small panty liner, but if the discharge becomes very heavy, smelly or bothers you, please call reception to discuss with a medical practitioner.

Can I wear the pessary during sexual intercourse?

You can have sex with a ring pessary, but you cannot with a shelf pessary. We can teach you to take out your ring pessary before sex and replace it yourself, if you would prefer; this is safe to do at home. The pessary is not a form of contraception, so please continue to use your usual method of contraception.

References:

Vaginal pessary for prolapse – information for women:

<https://www.ouh.nhs.uk/patient-guide/leaflets/files/65609Ppessary.pdf>

Insertion and removal of a vaginal pessary:

<https://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/patient-information-and-leaflets/documents/patient-information-leaflets-a-z/2524-insertion-and-removal-of-a-vaginal-pessary/file>