Pessary

A pessary is a small plastic or silicone device. It is placed into the vagina and held in place by the pelvic floor muscles. It provides support for pelvic prolapse and stress urinary incontinence. The Pessary works by applying pressure to the urethra (the tube that drains urine from the bladder) against the pubic bone. It also supports the lower part of the bladder.

Sometimes pessaries can be used instead of surgery. Pelvic prolapse is a weakness in the muscles that hold your bladder, uterus, and rectum in place. This muscle weakness may allow these organs to bulge into the vagina.

This may be caused by:
- Pregnancy
- Childbirth
- Excess weight
- Chronic constipation
- Chronic cough
- Repeated heavy lifting
- Aging

Choosing the right Pessary depends on your condition. Your doctor or nurse practitioner may need to try several sizes or styles during the fitting.

- After fitting, you will need to have follow-up visits.
- You must be able to insert and remove the pessary yourself.
- Most pessaries can be left in place during sex. Talk to your doctor or NP.
- If your pessary has metal parts it will need to be taken out before some tests, such as MRI or x-ray.
- You may notice slight bleeding when you take out the pessary. You may need to use estrogen or other cream. This can help to keep the vaginal walls healthy.
- It is okay to use a pessary if you use the Estring®. Be sure to insert the Estring® before the pessary. Replace the Estring® every 3 months.
- If your weight changes more than 10 pounds you may need to be re-sized.
- If the pessary shows signs of wear or defects you will need a new one.

Follow Up

- Return to the clinic after 1 week after fitting so that the fit can be rechecked. The pessary will be removed and the vagina will be examined for irritation or allergic reaction.
- Return in 2 weeks and 6 months. Some patients may need to return to the clinic more often for re-fitting.
- Yearly exam of vaginal wall.
- Call if the pessary falls out and you are unable to replace it.
Pessary Care

- Most pessaries can be worn for many days to months before they have to be taken out and cleaned.
- Clean with mild soap and warm water. Rinse well and reinsert. Use estrogen or other cream at least 2 nights a week, or when the pessary is out.
- The pessary may fall out of the vagina if you strain or lift something. Try not to bear down during bowel movements. If the pessary dislodges, it can be reinserted after cleaning with soap and water.
- Insertion may be easier while standing with your foot resting on a stool. Other choices are while sitting on the toilet or lying on your back. Make sure to use enough water-based lubricant with insertion.

Pessary Type: ____________________________________
Pessary Size: ____________________________________

When to Call the Doctor

- Pain passing urine.
- Pain with bowel movements.
- Problems passing urine.
- Problems having bowels movements.
- Excess or foul discharge from vagina.
- Bloody discharge
- Pain, pressure, or itching in the vagina.
- Fever or chills
- Abdominal pain

Phone Numbers

Urology Clinic: (608) 263-4757

After hours, weekends and holidays this connects to the message center.
Ask for the doctor on call for Dr. _________________________________.
Leave your name and phone number with area code and the doctor will call you back.

Toll Free: 1-800-323-8942