

MANAGING YOUR RING PESSARY

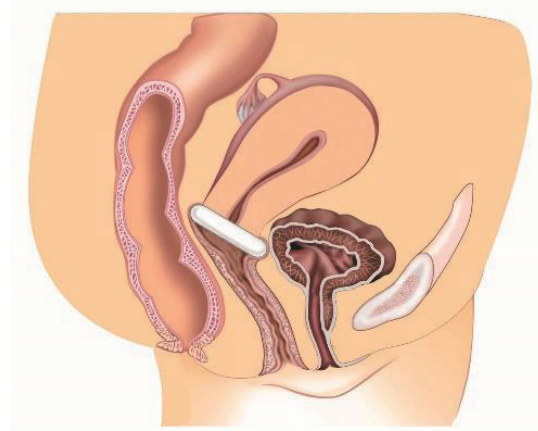


WEARING YOUR RING PESSARY

A ring pessary is a support pessary designed to support your pelvic organ prolapse by pressing against the walls of the uterus to support your bladder and uterus.

FITTING YOUR RING PESSARY

- 1 If possible, try emptying your bowels before inserting your pessary
- 2 Wash your hands
- 3 With your dominant hand, grasp the pessary midway between the two notches and fold the pessary in half. The curve should look like a rainbow (see Figure 1)
- 4 Put a small amount of lubricant on the insertion edge of the pessary
- 5 Place one leg on a step or bathtub or squat down and try to relax your pelvic floor and thigh muscles
- 6 With your non-dominant hand, separate your labia
- 7 Gently insert the pessary into the base of your vagina, along the back wall. Once the whole pessary is inserted, use your index finger to push the edge of the pessary as far up into the vagina as possible



REMOVING YOUR RING PESSARY

- 1 Wash your hands
- 2 Place one leg on a step or bathtub or squat down and try to relax your pelvic floor and thigh muscles
- 3 Find the rim of your pessary just under your pubic bone at the front of your vagina
- 4 Hook your finger under or over the ring and pull the pessary gentle but quickly out of the vagina
- 5 If you have trouble reaching the pessary, bear down gently like you are passing a bowel movement. This can help push the rim of the pessary forward so that you can grasp it more easily



Figure 1

CLEANING YOUR RING PESSARY

Your ring pessary must be removed once weekly and left out overnight and can then be reinserted the following morning.

After removing your pessary, wash it with warm soapy water, rinse with water and then dry the pessary. Ensure you store your pessary in a safe place over night.

Your pessary can then be re-inserted the next morning.

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects of using a ring pessary may include:

- Increased vaginal discharge
- Constipation
- Onset or worsening of urinary incontinence
- Vaginal wall erosion (similar to a graze or pressure sore on the vaginal wall)
- Vaginal bleeding
- New onset of vaginal or lower abdominal pain.

These are mild side effects which can easily be managed by your healthcare team.

More serious side effects such as excessive, bad smelling vaginal discharge, persistent vaginal bleeding or difficulty emptying your bladder or bowels can occur. All potential side effects are significantly reduced with regular follow up appointments with your physiotherapist and general practitioner. If you begin to experience any side effects, please contact your health care professional.

Removal of your pessary once weekly will also significantly reduce the chances of experiencing any moderate to severe side effects.

ONGOING FOLLOW UP SCHEDULE

Regular follow up appointments with your Physiotherapist and healthcare team are a vital part of pessary management. These are extremely important to help in reducing any side effects and must occur:

- 1-2 weeks post initial fitting
- 4 months post initial fitting
- 12 months post initial fitting
- Every 12 months thereafter for as long as you are using the pessary.

You will also be required to have a speculum examination performed by your General Practitioner or Gynaecologist annually to review your vaginal tissue.

Do not hesitate to contact your Physiotherapist if you have any issues between follow up appointments.



OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- It may take a few sessions for the correct pessary to be fitted to you. Your pessary may shift or move slightly. If it falls out or you can feel your pessary when it is in place please let your Physiotherapist know.
- Your ring pessary can be worn during sexual intercourse
- Continue with your pelvic floor strengthening exercises as prescribed by your Physiotherapist.
- If you have prescribed vaginal oestrogen, remember to use it consistently as advised

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