



Vaginal prolapse is a common condition where the bladder, bowel or womb descend into the vagina.

Symptoms include:

- the sensation of a vaginal lump
- constipation
- difficulty emptying the bowel or bladder
- problems with sexual intercourse.

Treatment is recommended when you are experiencing symptoms. There are a number of ways that vaginal prolapse can be treated. This fact sheet is about vaginal pessary. This treatment will not be suitable for all women.

What is vaginal pessary?

A vaginal pessary is a device which supports the vagina. It needs to be changed every three to six months. Vaginal pessaries have been proven to be as successful as surgery in relieving prolapse symptoms. You and your doctor will discuss the most suitable option for you.

How does a pessary work?

The pessary sits high inside the vagina. When it is in the correct position you should not be able to feel it. After the pessary has been inserted you can resume all of your normal day to day activity, including sexual activity. In fact the pessary should improve your ability to be active as it supports the prolapse and should make you feel more comfortable.

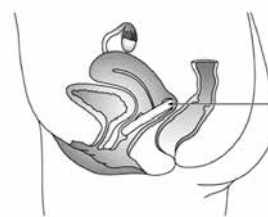
If you feel the pessary is not working well, it can easily be removed. The pessaries are made from long lasting plastic and you do not need to change them yourself.

How is the pessary inserted?

The pessary is easy to insert. It is inserted through your vagina.

Your doctor can insert the pessary at your visit to the outpatient department. No anaesthetic is required.

Sometimes a number of sizes need to be tried to find the right size for you. The wrong size may fall out. If this happens you can dispose of the pessary and contact the hospital for an another appointment.



Pessary in position

Are there any risks?

Very rarely the pessary causes pressure areas in the vagina. It is important that you see your doctor every six months to have the pessary changed and to check the vagina. Please tell your doctor if you notice any unusual bleeding.

There is no risk of the pessary being lost inside the vagina.

Do I need to do anything with the pessary?

Your doctor may ask you to use some oestrogen cream in the vagina. This will keep the vagina healthy while the pessary is in place.

You will need to see your doctor every 4 to 6 months to have the pessary changed.

Your doctor will be happy to answer any questions you have and can give you more specific advice.

If you experience complications after you leave hospital please see your local doctor or you may attend the Emergency Department at the Women's (03) 8345 3636 or your closest emergency department.

Where to get more information

Urogynaecology Pelvic Floor Service

Royal Women's Hospital
Tel: (03) 8345 2000