

WHAT IS A PESSARY?

Pessaries are silicone or plastic devices that are fitted into the vagina and worn for days, weeks or months at a time. They are worn and fitted similar to a vaginal diaphragm. Vaginal pessaries have been used for years for a variety of medical problems including treatment of urinary incontinence, dropped pelvic organs and to hold the uterus in place during pregnancy.

HOW ARE PESSARIES FITTED?

Pessaries are fitted by trial and error and it may take several office visits to obtain an optimum fit for you. Each person's anatomy is different so our office uses pessary sizers to fit patients with the correct type and size of pessary. Since pessaries come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, it is important that you let your doctor or nurse know what effect the pessary/sizer has on your symptoms. With instruction, some women are able to insert and remove their own pessary. All women that wear a pessary routinely will need to have periodic vaginal examinations by their doctor.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER A FINAL FIT IS DETERMINED?

Most women have very little problem with a properly fitted pessary. A properly fitted pessary should be comfortable and many women report they hardly know it is there!

HOW ARE PESSARIES BILLED AND PAID FOR?

Most insurance companies pay the doctor for each visit where a pessary is either attempted to be fit or a final fitting is made. It is usually not possible to get a proper fit in one or two visits.

Some insurance companies pay for the pessary itself and some do not. If your insurance company does not pay for the pessary, then you will be instructed on how to purchase your pessary directly.

Initial pessary fittings are categorized in the American Medical Association coding book, the national standard, as surgical procedures even though they are not performed in the operating room in a hospital or outpatient surgery center. For that reason, the bill from your insurance company may show that you had surgery on the days of each new pessary fitting. Many insurance companies realize the confusion this has caused patients in the past and are beginning to accurately categorize the pessary fittings as office procedures. If your pessary is just being removed, cleaned and reinserted, an appropriate office visit code is billed by your doctor. Should you have any questions about the billing, please call our billing office at our toll free number 866/213-7118.

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If you have any questions about any information in this handout or any other questions, please do not hesitate to call our office for further information.

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