

Women and Children -  
Gynaecology

# Pessary Clinic



INFORMATION  
FOR PATIENTS

## Pessary information

Your prolapse problem necessitated the use of a pessary that has been inserted into your vagina. There are different types of pessaries, the commonest one is the ring pessary which is a flexible ring used to support the tissues that have become weak, they are a safe piece of equipment, usually easy to insert and should make you feel more comfortable. It is not always possible to choose the correct size or shape immediately and your consultant may need to try a different size or shape until you feel the most benefit. When your pessary fits comfortably you will be seen for follow-up in a nurse-led clinic.

### **You should contact the consultant or nurse at the hospital if:**

- Your pessary falls out
- You develop an offensive vaginal discharge
- You notice any unexpected vaginal bleeding
- You experience discomfort
- You develop difficulty in passing urine or opening your bowels after pessary insertion

You may find that sometimes the ring is visible or that you can feel it, this may occur after having your bowels opened due to straining, and is not a problem. You will do yourself no harm by gently pushing it back in place.

It is important that you avoid becoming constipated, if you find that a change of diet or extra fluids are not enough then your GP may prescribe some medication to keep your bowel regular.

Sometimes the pessary affects bladder function (either make you dry when you have been incontinent or the reverse) if this happens then you need to inform the consultant or nurse of this as this information will help in the management of your problem. If you suffer from incontinence then we can see you earlier in the clinic to discuss other options.

Your pessary must be checked every six months (or a timed interval decided by your consultant). This is important for hygienic reasons and to make sure that the pessary has not caused any soreness to the delicate tissue in the vagina. If all is well the pessary may be washed and put back in the vagina, the pessary will be replaced with a new one every 6 months or, if a silicone pessary, when showing wear and tear.

## Sexual intercourse

This depends on the type of pessary; the majority of couples are able to have satisfactory sexual intercourse with a ring pessary inside. If you or your partner find that the ring pessary is getting in the way you may want to be taught how to insert and remove the pessary yourself. This will mean you can take the pessary out yourself prior to sexual intercourse and put back in afterwards.

Other pessaries such as shelf or Gelhorn pessaries are generally not compatible with sexual intercourse.

## MRI scans

Some pessaries have a metal component and therefore will have to be removed prior to an MRI scan. The majority of pessaries are metal free and can be left in. Please check with your consultant or nurse if you are having an MRI scan.

## General advice

It is very important that you make every effort to attend for your clinic appointment.

However, if you cannot attend for any reason it is important to let us know so that your appointment time can be used by someone else and we can arrange another appointment for you. **Please inform the appointments office on: 01642 282424.**

If you have any anxieties or questions relating to your appointment please do not hesitate to contact our advice line:

**The James Cook University Hospital telephone: 01642 854243**

**Friarage Hospital telephone: 01609 764814**

## Patient Experience

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust would like your feedback. If you wish to share your experience about your care and treatment or on behalf of a patient, please contact The Patient Experience Department who will advise you on how best to do this.

This service is based at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services.

To ensure we meet your communication needs please inform the Patient Experience Department of any special requirements, i.e. Braille/ Large Print.

T: 01642 835964

E: [stees.patient.experience@nhs.net](mailto:stees.patient.experience@nhs.net)

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