

## All About Pessaries

### What is a Pessary?

- Removable silicone device inserted into the vagina to provide internal support to the pelvic organs
- They come in lots of different shapes and sizes → most common is the ring pessary
- Usually fitted by a Gynaecologist or some trained Pelvic Health Physiotherapists

### When are they needed?

1. Pelvic organ prolapse - pessary provides structural support to hold the organs in place.
2. Stress urinary incontinence - some designs can help reduce leakage with activity by supporting the bladder neck.
3. Women who are not yet ready for surgery - used as a conservative option.
4. During pregnancy or the postnatal period - in conjunction with your medical team, they can be used where prolapse symptoms are significant.

### Pessaries and exercise

One of the most common uses of pessaries postpartum is for return to exercise with adequate support. This is especially important for higher impact exercise such as running, HIIT and lifting.

#### *How it works:*

- You insert the pessary before exercise and remove it after
- It can help by reducing symptoms like prolapse heaviness or leakage
- It allows people to exercise with confidence whilst building pelvic floor strength
- As the pelvic floor gets stronger, you may need the pessary less

### Could a pessary be right for you?

Pessaries may be an option for those who...

- Feel heaviness, dragging or bulging sensation in my vagina especially after/ during exercise or later in the day
- Leak with running, jumping, sneezing or coughing (related to their prolapse)
- Have symptoms that are holding them back from returning to exercise or living normal life
- Those not ready for or interested in surgery

*Pessaries can be discussed with your practitioner, and the required referral can be made for a pessary fitting if required.*