

**Before commencing a pessary fitting enquire if the woman wishes to be sexually active (with vaginal penetration) and if she**

First fitting with a **ring pessary** (explain sexual activity is possible with this)  
 Consider a ring with support for apical prolapse  
 Consider a ring with knob if stress urinary incontinence (SUI) is a new or pre-existing issue

If expelled, uncomfortable or fails to provide sufficient support

**TROUBLESHOOTING STEPS if pessary is expelled**

- Consider how long the pessary remained *in situ* and when it was expelled (e.g. while straining)  
This may still be the correct size and type of pessary
- Consider comorbidities (e.g. constipation), and whether this can be optimised to reduce straining and likelihood of pessary expulsion
- Consider whether the woman might be willing and able to reinsert her pessary after expulsion if it is comfortable and supportive otherwise

**TROUBLESHOOTING STEPS if pessary fails to support**

- Ensure pessary is the correct size and this cannot be increased
- Consider using two ring pessaries if one ring pessary does not provide sufficient support, and if there is no availability of alternative specialist pessaries

Consider a different type of pessary

Sexually active

Not sexually active

- Vaginal penetration is possible with any pessary without a stem such as a ring or dish with or without support or a Shaatz pessary
- Space occupying pessaries and those with a stem will limit vaginal penetration during sexual activity e.g. a shelf, Gellhorn, or Donut
- Consider self-management but space occupying pessaries may be difficult to self-manage
- Consider that silicone pessaries are less rigid than plastic ones

- Any pessary whether space occupying or not and with stem or without can be offered.
- Consider the different shapes and materials of pessaries and which may fit best, be most comfortable to remove and insert, and provide optimal support depending on a woman's anatomy
- Consider that a Gellhorn and silicone shelf pessary is available with a short or long stem depending on vaginal length

If expelled, uncomfortable or fails to provide sufficient support

Repeat steps from TROUBLESHOOTING boxes

Not willing or able to attempt *daily* self-management

Consider self-management

Willing and able to attempt *daily* self-management

Discuss **alternatives to pessary management** of prolapse such as surgery or support underwear

If expelled, uncomfortable or fails to provide sufficient support:

- consider a **tandem cube** pessary

Consider a **Cube or Inflatable** pessary

- Consider that an inflatable pessary may easier for the woman to self-manage
- Caution! Some inflatable pessaries are made from latex