

USE OF PESSARIES IN THE CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT OF PELVIC ORGAN PROLAPSE

Ana Faria Ulhoa

Resident of Gynecology and Obstetrics at the institution: Hospital Regional Antônio Dias-HRAD/ FHEMIG

Laura Fernandes Ferreira

Medical student at the institution: Centro Universitário de Patos de Minas – UNIPAM

Adelaide Maria Ferreira Campos D'Ávila

Professor of Medicine at the institution: Centro Universitário de Patos de Minas – UNIPAM

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



Abstract: Introduction: Pessaries are removable intravaginal devices that return the pelvic organs to their anatomical place.. **Methodology:** Integrative literature review carried out in Medline and Scielo databases. Original articles and literature reviews, published in Portuguese, Spanish or English, between January 2018 and August 2022 were included. **Results and Discussion:** The pessary provides relief from symptoms with low morbidity, being effective in resolving symptoms and improving quality of life, with no inferior performance to the surgical method. In addition to the anatomical reorganization, it favors the strength and support elements of the pelvic organs, better recruitment of myofibrils and improvement of the patient's sexual function and body image.. **Conclusion:** The pessary is an excellent therapeutic option for all patients, regardless of the degree of pelvic organ prolapse, with high levels of satisfaction.. **Keywords:** Pessary; Pelvic organ prolapse; Conservative treatment.

INTRODUCTION

Pelvic organ prolapse (POP) is defined as weakness or sagging of the supporting tissues of the pelvic region, causing the vagina, urethra, bladder, rectum, and bowel to move out of their anatomical position (BUMP, et al, 1996; HAYLEN). , et al, 2010). Among the risk factors for this involvement, there are multiparity, menopause, previous hysterectomy, changes in connective tissue, factors that increase intra-abdominal pressure and age over 60 years (CARTWRIGHT, et al, 2014).

Symptoms range from a "ball in the vagina" sensation to incontinence, urgency and increased urinary frequency, pelvic pain, abdominal grip, difficulty with bowel emptying and dyspareunia, depending on the prolapsed pelvic organ (CARDOSO,

2010). According to the FEMINA protocol (2019), treatment can be divided into conservative, with the use of vaginal pessaries and physical therapy, and invasive, using reconstructive surgery, according to the affected compartment.

Pessaries are removable devices, inserted intravaginally, which put the pelvic organs back in their anatomical place, serving as a support (CHMA, 2016). The new protocols recommend its use as a first-line option, cost-effective, viable and effective in the long term, with high levels of satisfaction (FERREIRA, et al, 2018).

Thus, the aim of this study is to review what has been reported in the literature on the conservative treatment of pelvic organ prolapse with a pessary.

METHODS

The research consists of an integrative literature review on the use of pessary in the treatment of pelvic organ prolapse. To carry it out, steps were taken, such as: definition of the theme, elaboration of the research question, establishment of search criteria in the literature, definition of information extracted from articles, analysis and interpretation of results, identification of themes and cores of meanings and synthesis of the discussion of the theme confronting it with the studied literature.

The study was guided by the guiding question: "What are the benefits of conservative treatment of pelvic organ prolapse with a pessary?". And articles were selected from Medline and Scielo databases. The search was performed based on the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and the Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS), having the following descriptors: "Pelvic organ prolapse" or "Pelvic organ prolapse" and "Conservative Treatment" and "Pessary".

This selection was carried out between August and September 2022, independently, by all researchers, who later met to compare the selected sample, discuss discrepancies and reach a consensus on the articles included in the study. For this, a table was built with the results, which contained the title, year of publication, type of article, objectives and main findings.

As inclusion criteria, original articles and literature reviews were considered that addressed the topic “treatment of pelvic organ prolapse with a pessary” and that allowed full access to the study content, published in Portuguese, Spanish or English, between January 2018 to August 2022. Duplicate articles, articles that addressed other forms of conservative treatment other than the pessary, or those that dealt only with surgical approaches were excluded from the study.

RESULTS

In total, 150 articles were found, of which the published titles and abstracts were read. After a careful reading of the publications, 143 articles were not used due to the exclusion criteria. Thus, 7 articles were used and analyzed in this study (Figure 1).

DISCUSSION

Women who have pelvic organ prolapse have a significant negative impact on quality of life (BARROS, et al, 2021). In this regard, the pessary proved to be an excellent therapeutic option for all patients, regardless of the affected vaginal compartment and staging (MENDES; CELES, 2020).

The pessary is a conservative, minimally invasive treatment that provides immediate symptom relief with low morbidity. The same proved to be effective in resolving symptoms and improving quality of life, not showing inferior performance to the surgical correction method, even in more advanced

stages of prolapse, such as grades 3 or 4 (BARROS, et al, 2018).

For conservative treatment with vaginal pessaries in postmenopausal women, prior preparation of the vaginal mucosa with local estrogen is recommended (PEREIRA; SENE, 2021). A study by Mendes, Celes (2020) showed that the use of the pessary improves women’s quality of life and symptoms, even after removal of the device, by bringing long-term anatomical improvements. The time of use of the pessary directly influenced the improvement of prolapse measures, related to the repositioning of muscles and ligaments, in addition to a readjustment of Organs pelvic organs in the anatomical position for a longer period of time.

According to Niigaki (2018), the best cost-effectiveness and the improvement in quality of life occur in patients who have used it for more than a year. According to Coelho, et al (2019), conservative treatment for six months can already improve the quality of life and reduce the vaginal symptoms of women with pelvic organ prolapse, even in an advanced degree (COELHO, et al, 2019).

Pereira, Sena (2021) add that in addition to the anatomical reorganization, there is an increase in strength and support elements of the pelvic organs, better recruitment of myofibrils and consequent improvement in the patient’s sexual function and body image, due to the reestablishment of the muscle function of this patient. region. In addition, the research by Barros, et al (2021) concludes that the device, by bringing comfort and being less invasive, reduces depressive symptoms that can negatively interfere with female self-esteem. This way, the device can be used as a first-line treatment, with better cost-benefit compared to surgical procedures (MENDONCA, et al, 2022).

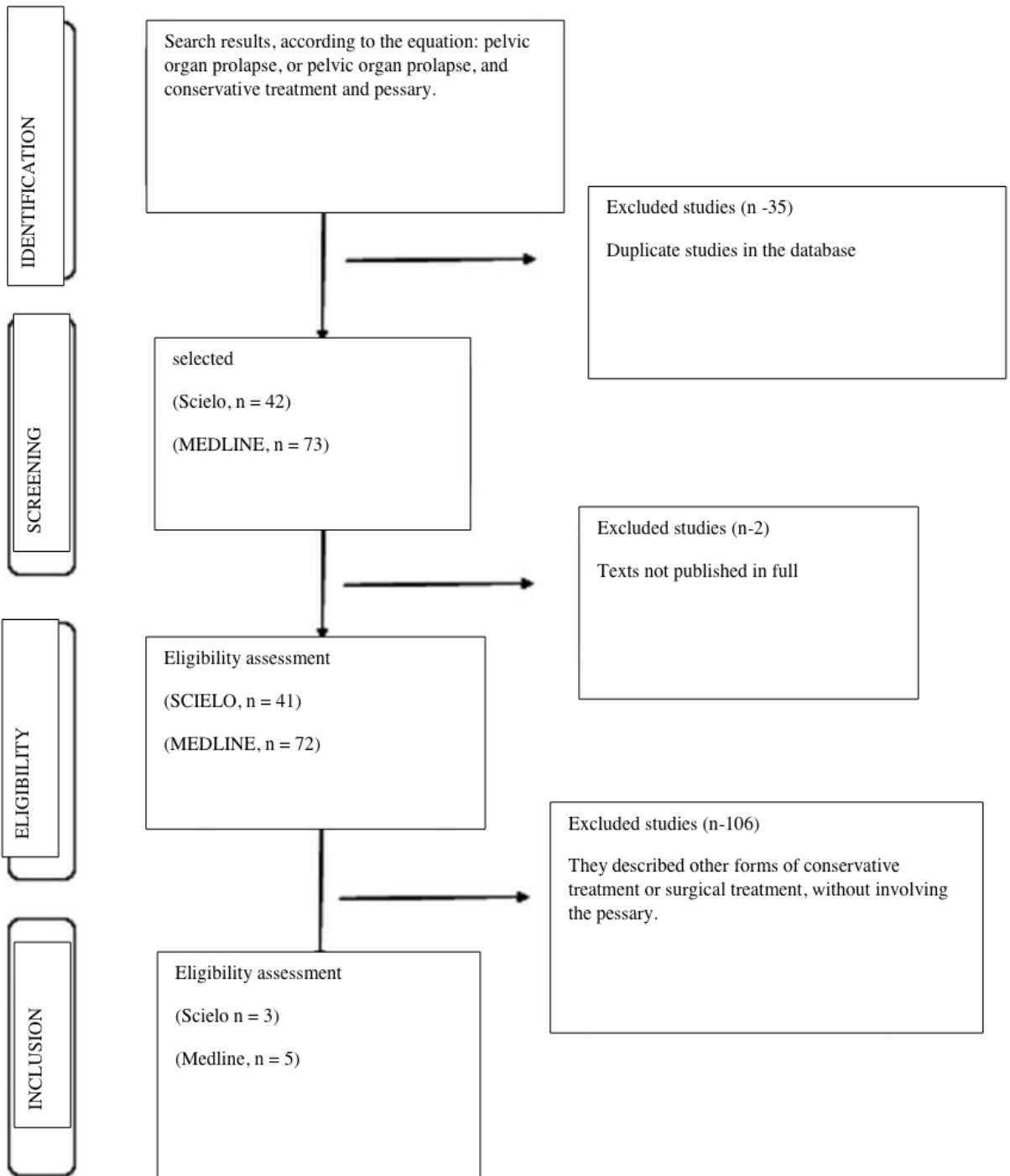


Figure 1- Study selection flowchart. Patos de Minas, MG, Brazil, 2022.

Study	Method	Goals	Main findings
BARROS, et al, 2018.	Literature review.	To analyze the impact on the quality of life of women with pelvic organ prolapse who underwent treatment with a pessary.	The use of the pessary proved to be effective in resolving the symptoms of pelvic organ prolapse, not showing an inferior performance compared to the surgical method of correction. Even in more advanced stages of prolapse (Grade 3 or 4), it has been shown to be effective in reducing symptoms and improving quality of life.
NIIGAKI, 2018.	Prospective observational study.	To evaluate a cohort of women with symptomatic pelvic organ prolapse and to identify the factors that influence their use for more than one year.	The pessary is a conservative, minimally invasive treatment that provides immediate symptom relief with low morbidity. It has a good cost-effectiveness and improves the quality of life of patients who have used it for more than a year.
COELHO, et al, 2019.	Prospective and observational study.	To assess quality of life after insertion of a pessary for pelvic organ prolapse.	Conservative treatment using a pessary for six months improved quality of life and reduced vaginal symptoms in women with advanced pelvic organ prolapse.
MENDES, 2020.	Prospective cohort study.	To evaluate the effect of treating pelvic organ prolapse with a vaginal pessary in terms of anatomical improvement and quality of life for women.	The pessary improves the symptoms of a ball in the vagina and the quality of life of women using it, even after the device is removed. The time of use of the pessary directly influenced the long-term anatomical improvement.
BARROS, et al, 2021.	Longitudinal study.	To analyze the quality of life of women undergoing treatment for pelvic organ prolapse with a pessary.	Patients reported comfort and improved quality of life with conservative treatment. The pessary has positive results, which could explain the improvement in quality of life and, consequently, the decrease in depressive symptoms.
PEREIRA, SENA, 2021.	Literature review.	To present the benefits of conservative treatment and physical therapy intervention in pelvic organ prolapse.	Treatment with pessaries offers relief from symptoms, increased strength and supporting elements of the pelvic organs, better recruitment of myofibrils, and consequent improvement in the patient's quality of life, sexual function and body image.
MENDONÇA, et al, 2022.	Literature review.	To describe the benefits and effectiveness of vaginal pessaries in the lives of women with pelvic organ prolapses.	Pessaries improve quality of life and decrease symptoms caused by genital dystopias. This device can be used as a first-line treatment, with better cost-benefit compared to surgical procedures.

Table 1 indicates the information found in the articles included in the research.

CONCLUSION

The pessary is an excellent therapeutic option for all patients, regardless of the degree of pelvic organ prolapse. This is because its minimally invasive use favors an anatomical rearrangement and improves pelvic strength, which generate symptomatic improvement.

Consequently, female self-esteem is regained as the condition improves. Therefore, the pessary has become the first line in the

treatment of pelvic organ prolapse, with effectiveness equivalent to surgical treatment.

Even though it is a proven effective therapeutic option, few professionals manage with the pessary, due to the lack of publicity and mainly the lack of experience of gynecologists to indicate it. This way, the chain of knowledge is not established, resulting in the non-use of the method, hence the importance of knowing about it and promoting new research from it.

REFERENCES

- BARROS, C.R, et al. Avaliação da Qualidade de vida com P-Qol em mulheres submetidas ao tratamento de prolapso de órgãos pélvicos com pessário. **Revista Multidisciplinar da Saúde (RMS)**. 2021.
- BARROS, C.R, et al. Tratamento conservador de prolapso de órgão pélvico com pessário: Literature review. **Rev Med (São Paulo)**. 2018.
- BUMP, R.C, et al. The standardization of terminology of female pelvic organ prolapse and pelvic floor dysfunction. **Am J Obstet Gynecol**. 1996.
- CARDOSO, B. Prolapso dos Órgãos Pélvicos. **Associação Portuguesa de Neurourologia e Uroginecologia- APUNG**. 2010.
- CARTWRIGHT, R, et al. Systematic review and meta-analysis of candidate gene association studies of lower urinary tract symptoms in men. **Eur Urol**. 2014.
- CHMA. Centro Hospitalar do Médio AVE, EPE. Pessário vaginal- prolapso de órgãos pélvicos. Guia para mulheres. **INF.OBGI**. 2016.
- COELHO, S.C.A, et al. Quality of life and vaginal symptoms of postmenopausal women using pessary for pelvic organ prolapse: a prospective study. **REV ASSOC MED BRAS**. 2018.
- FERREIRA, H.L.O.C, et al. Protocolo para tratamento de prolapso de órgãos pélvicos com pessário vaginal. **Acta Paul Enferm**. 2018.
- HAYLEN, B.T, et al. An International Urogynecological Association (IUGA)/ International Continence Society (ICS) joint report on the terminology for female pelvic floor dysfunction. **Int Urogynecol J Pelvic Floor Dysfunct**. 2010.
- MENDES, L.C. MELHORA SINTOMÁTICA E ANATÔMICA DO PROLAPSO DE ÓRGÃOS PÉLVICOS EM USUÁRIAS DE PESSÁRIOS VAGINAIS. DEPARTAMENTO DE CIRURGIA MESTRADO EM CIÊNCIAS MÉDICO-CIRÚRGICAS. **UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO CEARÁ FACULDADE DE MEDICINA**. 2020.
- MENDONÇA, T.N.C, et al. A EFICÁCIA DOS PESSÁRIOS VAGINAIS NO TRATAMENTO DE DISTOPIAS GENITAIS: UMA REVISÃO INTEGRATIVA. **Rev Enferm Atual In Derme**. 2022.
- NIIGAKI, D.I. PREDITORES DE SUCESSO NA UTILIZAÇÃO DE PESSÁRIO VAGINAL PARA TRATAMENTO DE PROLAPSO DE ÓRGÃOS PÉLVICOS APÓS SEGUIMENTO DE UM ANO. MESTRADO EM CIÊNCIAS. **UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SÃO PAULO – ESCOLA PAULISTA DE MEDICINA**. 2018.
- PEREIRA, M.R; SENA, N.S. OS BENEFÍCIOS DO TRATAMENTO CONSERVADOR E INTERVENÇÃO FISIOTERAPÊUTICA NO PROLAPSO DE ÓRGÃOS PÉLVICOS (POP). **SEMANA ONLINE CIENTÍFICA DE SAÚDE**. 2021.