

## UTERINE PROLAPSE

### What is it?

A prolapsed uterus is one which has moved downward from its normal location in the pelvis causing it to bulge into the vagina. Sometimes the urethra and bladder are also affected (respectively called urethrocele and cystocele) and possibly the rectum (rectocele). This situation happens when ligaments and muscles in the region become stretched. This can occur during childbirth or simply due to aging. Repeated vaginal delivery is the most likely reason although even one pregnancy can eventually cause a prolapse. Other conditions that may lead to a prolapsed uterus are obesity, tumors, chronic coughing, chronic constipation, being out-of-shape and jobs requiring continuous heavy lifting.

### Treatment:

- \* Kegel exercises to tighten muscles in the pelvic region.
- \* Hormone (estrogen) therapy. Estrogens increase blood flow to vaginal tissue increasing its strength and elasticity.
- \* Pessary inserted into vagina to help keep uterus in place.
- \* Surgery to reattach the uterus, urethra or bladder.
- \* Hysterectomy may be necessary.
- \* Lose unnecessary weight.
- \* Try and prevent constipation; eat a diet rich in fiber and drink lots of fluids.
- \* If not treated, a prolapsed uterus can lead to cervical ulceration, blockage of the urinary tract and an increased infection risk to pelvic organs.