



Progesterone in pregnancy

Patient information

What is vaginal progesterone?

Progesterone is a sex hormone that is needed to maintain a pregnancy. It occurs naturally but some people need extra to help prevent their baby being born early. We can give extra progesterone through a pessary (soft capsule) that you insert into your vagina.

Why is progesterone used?

We may recommend you use it to help prevent your baby from being born early. This is called premature birth. Premature birth is when your baby is born between 20 and 37 weeks into your pregnancy. Babies born early have a higher risk of short and long term health problems.

When is progesterone used?

We may recommend you use it if:

- You have had a preterm birth before
- You have lost a pregnancy between 16 and 24 weeks
- You have had an ultrasound that shows you have a shortened cervix

How do I get it?

Your doctor or midwife will write you a prescription. You can take your prescription to any pharmacy.

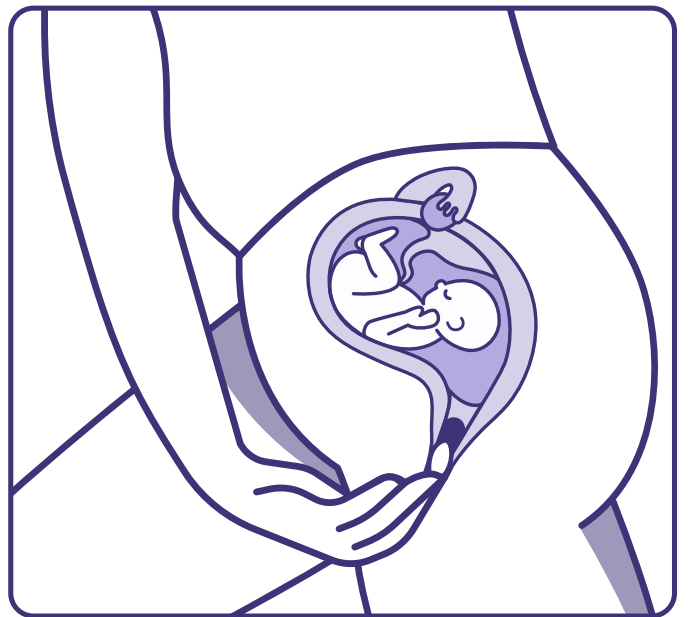
How is it used?

We recommend a dose of 200mg progesterone in the form of a pessary or dissolving capsule that you put inside your vagina each evening until you are 36 weeks pregnant.

Using progesterone pessaries

The best time to put the pessary in is at night before going to bed.

- Wash your hands thoroughly
- Remove the pessary from the wrapper
- You can moisten the pessary by dipping it into cold water for a few seconds to make it easier to insert
- Gently push the pessary into your vagina using your finger
- We recommend lying down for 30mins after inserting the pessary



What else do I need to know?

You may like to wear a panty liner for any discharge, which may happen while using progesterone pessaries.

Side effects are rare but some women may feel itching in the vagina. Rare side effects include headaches, nausea and vomiting.

If you have any bleeding or fluid loss from your vagina or any abdominal pain, call your doctor or midwife as soon as possible.

Useful contact details

King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) Emergency Centre If you have an urgent gynaecological or pregnancy-related (less than 20 weeks) medical condition you can come to our Emergency Centre

KEMH Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit If you are >20 weeks pregnant, booked to birth at KEMH, and you are worried about yourself or your baby, or you think you might be in labour, please contact the Maternal Fetal Assessment Unit (MFAU) on (08) 6458 2222. If you are booked at another hospital, please contact them.

KEMH Pharmacy Medicine Information Line (08) 6458 2723

Health Direct 1800 022 222

Pregnancy Birth and Baby Hotline 1800 882 436



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