



Vaginal Progesterone

Reducing your chance of preterm birth

This leaflet will tell you about Vaginal Progesterone.

It will tell you why you might need to take it.



What is Progesterone?

- Progesterone is a hormone.
Hormones are chemicals that our bodies make.
Hormones control how our bodies work.
- Your body makes progesterone when you have a period.
- Your body also makes progesterone when you are pregnant.
Progesterone helps your **womb** (where you baby grows).

What is Vaginal Progesterone?



You can be given extra progesterone.

This is vaginal progesterone.

- It is a small tablet.
- The tablet goes into your vagina.
- The tablet is smaller than a tampon.
- The tablet will dissolve quickly.

Taking vaginal progesterone will increase the amount of progesterone in your womb.

Why you might take Vaginal Progesterone



Vaginal progesterone can help reduce the risk of having a **preterm baby**.

A baby born before 37 weeks is a preterm baby.

A preterm baby is more likely to need extra care than a baby born after 37 weeks.

The baby might need to go to a special care baby unit.

Who might take Vaginal Progesterone?



Your doctor might suggest taking vaginal progesterone if:

- The neck of your womb is short. This is the distance between your womb and vagina. This will be seen in a scan at 16 and 24 weeks.
- You have had a preterm baby before.
- You have had a miscarriage between 16 and 34 weeks before.

Only take vaginal progesterone if your doctor orders it for you.

How does Vaginal Progesterone reduce the risk of having a preterm baby?



We don't really know.

But we do know:

- It can be anti inflammatory - it reduces swelling.
- It can delay changes in your womb that lead to labour.

How do I take Vaginal Progesterone?



1. Wash your hands
2. Lie down or squat. This makes it easier to put the tablet in.
3. Put the tablet between the lips of your vagina.
4. Push the tablet up and back with your finger.
5. Wash your hands.



The progesterone tablets can also be put in your bottom.

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gently push the tablet in about 1 inch.
3. Squeeze your buttocks together for a few seconds.
4. Wash your hands.

When do I use the tablet?



Put 1 tablet in every evening.

Put it in just before going to bed. The tablet is more likely to stay in. The progesterone is more likely to be effective.

When do I start to use the tablet?



Most people start between 16 to 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Some people start at 12 weeks. Your doctor will talk to you about when you should start.

How long will I use the tablet?



Most people will use it until they are 37 weeks pregnant.

Questions about Vaginal Progesterone



- Is it safe to take progesterone while pregnant?

Yes. Progesterone won't hurt your or your baby.

- Are there any side effects?

There are very few side effects.

Your vaginal discharge might change. There maybe more of it. Or it might be more watery.



- Other possible side effects:
 - ◇ Headaches.
 - ◇ Feeling of being sick.
 - ◇ Breasts feeling sore.
 - ◇ Coughing.
 - ◇ Vagina feeling sore.



- Do I have to take vaginal progesterone?
No. It is your choice.



If you have any questions about anything in this leaflet, talk to your doctor or midwife.

If you are worried about anything after you start taking vaginal progesterone:

- **Talk to your doctor or midwife.**