

Progesterone (Cyclogest) in early pregnancy

Patient Information Leaflet

Miscarriage is a common complication of early pregnancy, affecting approximately 20% of all pregnancies.

PROGESTERONE

Progesterone is a hormone that plays an important role in the menstrual cycle and in the early stages of pregnancy.

Our bodies make progesterone. It is made in the ovaries and tells the lining of the womb to grow. If you get pregnant, the fertilised egg attaches to this thickened lining. If you do not become pregnant, the womb sheds this thickened lining, which is passed during your period.

Progesterone also helps your body maintain your pregnancy in the early stages. It helps to prevent miscarriage.

You can increase your progesterone levels by taking it as a supplement. You will only need to do this if you have been prescribed it by a doctor for a particular reason.

Who will Benefit from progesterone?

The **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)** says you should be offered progesterone if:

- are bleeding in early pregnancy (before 12 weeks) and you have had 1 or more miscarriages before.
- your pregnancy is checked and in the right place in the womb (uterus) by an ultrasound scan.(The pessary may be started before your scan)
- Progesterone is not an effective treatment for women and birthing people with an ectopic pregnancy or a pregnancy of unknown location (PUL

This research also showed that progesterone is **not effective** if you take it

- before you get pregnant or
- during pregnancy if you do not have **both** vaginal bleeding **and** a history of miscarriage.

How effective is progesterone treatment?

If you have had 1 or 2 miscarriages, taking progesterone in early pregnancy may increase your chances of having a successful pregnancy by roughly 5%.

If you have had 3 or more miscarriages taking progesterone in early pregnancy may increase your chance of having a successful pregnancy by roughly 15%.

Will taking progesterone affect my baby?

The current guidelines tell us that there is no evidence of harm to a women or birthing person or their baby. They also say there is not enough evidence to totally rule out rare events. As with any treatment in pregnancy, it's impossible to predict every long-term outcome.

Where can I get progesterone treatment?

If you are bleeding or spotting, contact your GP surgery or local GP walk-in service. They may refer you to an Early Pregnancy Unit (EPU) if needed.

You can also contact NHS 111 at any time of day, and they will refer you to the most appropriate service.

If you are bleeding heavily or in a lot of pain, go straight to your local accident and emergency department (A&E).

How do I take progesterone?

You will probably be given progesterone as vaginal pessaries (400mg twice daily). This is a tablet that comes with an applicator that you use to put it high up in your vagina. Some people are given rectal pessaries instead or as well. You insert these into your bottom.

You use the pessaries from the time you have vaginal bleeding up to 16 weeks of pregnancy.

INSERTION

Always wash hands prior to inserting pessary.

Remove one pessary from strip.

Put the pessary on the end of your finger. Either insert into the vagina or rectum(bottom).

Insert into the vagina

Place the pessary between the lips of the vagina and push the pessary upwards and backwards. You may find it easier to do this if you are lying down or squatting.

Insert rectal (bottom)

Insert into rectum(bottom) gently push into the rectum for approximately one inch. Your muscles will hold the pessary in place when the pessary is in far enough. Squeeze your buttocks together for a few seconds.

Do not use Cyclogest if you:

- . Are allergic to progesterone
- . Have a known or suspected tumour that is hormone sensitive.

SIDE EFFECTS

Like all medicines Cyclogest can cause side effects. Although not everyone will have any side effects.

Side effects can include:

- . Headache, dizziness, mood change
- . Skin rash which may be itchy
- . Stomach discomfort or pain
- . Nausea
- . Drowsiness
- . Hot flushes/night sweats
- . Diarrhoea
- . Increased vaginal or anal discharge
- . Breast pain

Please read leaflet in medication prescribed.

What if I'm bleeding and more than 12 weeks pregnant?

If you have bleeding later in your pregnancy, contact the hospital maternity unit immediately so you can be checked.

We don't have enough evidence to say that the risk of miscarriage is reduced if progesterone supplements are started **after** 12 weeks of pregnancy and taken up to 16 weeks. Some hospitals may prescribe it to you anyway, but not all.

If you forget to use Cyclogest

If you forget to insert a pessary do so as soon as you remember unless it is nearly time for the next dose. Never use two doses together. Remember to use the remaining doses at the correct time.

How to store Cyclogest

- . Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.
- . Do not store above 30°C

. Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the label/carton or box.

. Do not throw away medicines via wastewater or household waste.

Ask your pharmacist how to discard any medication no longer in use.

If you have any questions please ring:

Early Pregnancy Unit

Telephone number: 01633493984

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**