

Vaginal Progesterone

This fact sheet has been developed to help you understand why your doctor or midwife recommends using vaginal progesterone pessaries. It includes instructions on how to put the progesterone into your vagina.



What is Vaginal Progesterone?

A hormone supplement pessary (soft capsule) that you put in your vagina. It is **not to be swallowed**.

Why is it used?

Using vaginal progesterone pessaries lowers the chance of having a baby born early (preterm birth). Babies born preterm have a higher chance of short and long term health and behaviour problems.

Why have I been asked to start using it?

- You have a short cervix, or
- You have had a previous preterm birth before 34 weeks, or
- You have had a pregnancy loss (miscarriage or stillbirth) between 16 and 24 weeks.

How do I get it?

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

Are there any side effects?

Some women might feel itching in the vagina. Rare side effects include headaches, nausea, vomiting and constipation. If you experience any side effects, please contact your doctor or midwife for advice.

Will I need to pay for the progesterone?

Yes. Medicare will cover part of the cost. If you are not eligible for Medicare, you may be charged the full amount. If you have a concession card or are registered for the Closing the Gap (CTG) medicines program, the progesterone will be much cheaper.

Is there anything else I should know?

You will need to use it every day until you are 36 weeks pregnant. After putting in the pessary, it is best to wait:

- 15 minutes before showering or having a bath
- 30 minutes before having sex

If you have any bleeding or fluid loss from your vagina, or contraction pain (pain that comes and goes), call your doctor or midwife straight away.

If you are currently smoking, by stopping completely, you will further reduce the chance of your baby being born preterm. Speak with your care provider about your options to help you quit.

For more information

SA Pharmacy Medicines Information Service

Women's and Children's Hospital

Phone: (08) 8161 7555 (9am – 5pm Weekdays)

Email: medinfo@sa.gov.au

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/pretermbirth

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How do I use Vaginal Progesterone?

(Refer to the instructions in the packet)



1 : The best time to put in the pessary is in the evening before bed.



2 : Wash your hands with soap and water.



3 : Remove pessary from packaging.



4 : Do not swallow. This is only for the vagina.



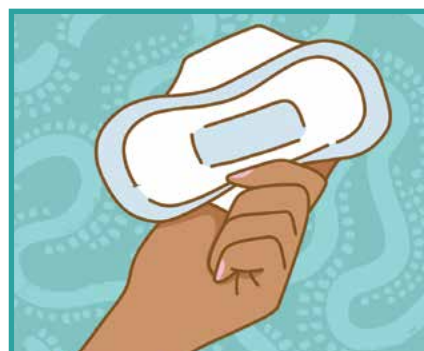
5 : You can moisten the pessary by dipping it in cold water for a few seconds to make it easier to insert.



6 : Gently push the pessary as far into your vagina as you can using your finger or the applicator provided.



7 : Wash your hands again with soap and water.



8 : You may want to wear a pad in your underwear for any vaginal discharge from the dissolving pessary.