



Freyja Medical Clinic

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Progesterone and Progesterone/Estrogen vaginal capsules

What is progesterone and Estrogen?

Progesterone and Estrogen are hormones normally produced by the ovary. Estrogen is produced all throughout the cycle while Progesterone is only produced during the second half of the menstrual cycle, i.e. from ovulation to the beginning of the next menstrual period. Both hormones and especially Progesterone helps to stabilize the endometrial lining and in such a way helps the developing embryo to “stick” well to the endometrial cavity wall.

Why is Progesterone and Estrogen sometimes given to people?

Many people might not be producing quite enough progesterone and Estrogen and the consequence is that the embryo does not attach well to the endometrial cavity wall resulting in a very early miscarriage. In order to minimize this risk, natural progesterone and sometimes combination Progesterone/Estrogen is often given to people where this might be a possibility. There is no risk whatsoever with this medication since it is identical to what your body normally produces. It is not one of the many synthetic types of progesterones and Estrogens that you find in birth control pills and other medications.

How is this medication taken?

The best way to take this medication is to use vaginal capsules that allow the hormones to migrate up towards the uterus where it will be needed. The close proximity will allow for a much higher concentration than what one would achieve taking it by mouth, a route favored in the past. Oral progesterone can also make people very sleepy. The only problem with the vaginal route is that the progesterone might irritate the vagina and external vulva. It might also leak out of the vagina and stain your underwear.

Using a small pad might be useful.

The usual dose of Progesterone is one capsule/suppository (200mg) in the morning and another capsule before going to bed. The usual dose of Progesterone/Estrogen capsules is one capsule/suppository (200mg Progesterone + 1mg Estrogen) in the morning and another capsule before going to bed.

When do I start taking it?

For the Progesterone only capsule/suppository, The best time to start is 2 days after the intrauterine insemination in the evening. If you are using an ovulation predictor kit and are having intercourse at home, start it in the evening 3 days after the day the predictor kit turns positive.

For the Progesterone/Estrogen capsule/suppository, the time to start is usually one day prior to the progesterone only capsule/suppository.

When do I stop taking it?

Progesterone will most of the time prevent your body from having a menses even if you are not pregnant. 14 days after the Intrauterine insemination (IUI) or 15 days after the day the ovulation predictor kit turns positive if no IUI is done (or sooner if directed by your MD), take a pregnancy test and if negative, stop the medication. Your menses will start within a few days of stopping the medication. If on the other hand your are pregnant, continue the medication until you are 10-12 weeks pregnant unless directed otherwise by your MD.

Where do I get the medications?

The Progesterone and Progesterone/Estrogen can only be found in a few pharmacies since the capsules have to be made by hand by the pharmacy itself. You will also need a prescription from your doctor to obtain the medication. Please call your pharmacy to see if they cover it. If you cannot find a pharmacy, Disco Rex pharmacy on 328 University Avenue always has them. Their hours are M-Sat 9-6.