



# Vaginal progesterone



Progesterone is a hormone made by women’s bodies that increases during pregnancy. Progesterone treatments can help reduce the chance of premature delivery for women who do not produce enough of the hormone. If you have a short cervix or have had a spontaneous birth after 16 weeks and before 37 weeks of pregnancy, you may be placed on this medicine.

## Q How do I use vaginal progesterone?

A Follow these steps:

1. Just before going to bed, empty your bladder and then wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Remove the medicine (pill or suppository) from its package.
3. If using a suppository, you may wet it with a small amount of water or K-Y® Jelly. **Do NOT use lotion or Vaseline.**
4. **Place the pill or suppository into the vagina like a tampon.** Place it far enough in, so it does not fall out. Be careful to not push the medicine into the cervix.
5. You may want to wear a sanitary pad or panty liner to protect your clothing from the medicine that may leak out overnight. **Do NOT use a tampon.**
6. Wash your hands with soap and water.

## Q Are there side effects?

A Progesterone does not have any known harmful effects on babies. The suppositories may cause vaginal dryness. Headaches, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea can sometimes occur. If these side effects worsen contact your doctor, midwife or nurse immediately.

## Q What should I do if I miss a dose?

A This medicine is taken one time a day at bedtime. If you miss a dose, restart the medicine at bedtime the next day. **Do NOT take 2 doses to make up for the missing dose.**

## Q How should I store the medicine?

A Keep the medicine at room temperature. Keep all medicines away from children.

## Q How do I get refills?

A When you have 7 capsules or suppositories left on your prescription, call the pharmacy phone number on the medicine label for a refill. You will be on this medicine until 36 weeks of pregnancy.

## Q When do I need to talk to my doctor, midwife or nurse?

A Talk to your doctor, midwife or nurse if the side effects listed earlier worsen while on this medicine and before starting any other medicines, including over the counter medicines, vitamins or herbal products.

## Q What are the warning signs of premature labor?

A Signs of premature labor are not the same for all women. Premature labor can begin suddenly and without warning, and the cause is not known. Call your doctor, midwife or nurse if you have any of these signs:

- Contractions, with or without pain, 4-6 times per hour
- Low, dull backache
- Pressure between your legs or in your lower belly
- Diarrhea
- Vaginal spotting or bleeding
- Leaking fluid or bleeding from your vagina
- Watery, clear, pink or red vaginal discharge
- Cramping, in the lower abdomen or back, like your period is going to start
- Sharp pains, contractions or tightening of your abdomen
- Feeling the baby is “balling up”
- Feeling like something is not right



OBBO is a partner in CelebrateOne, a community-wide initiative to reduce infant mortality and help more babies celebrate their first birthdays. For more information and resources, visit [www.celebrateone.info](http://www.celebrateone.info) and [www.ohiobetterbirthoutcomes.org](http://www.ohiobetterbirthoutcomes.org).

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