

Wellspring Surgery

Policy for Prescribing Medication to Postpone Menstruation

Background

Some women may wish to delay their menstruation if it is due at a time that would be inconvenient - for example, on a special holiday, during an exam, etc. This policy applies to patients who are not taking oral contraception or any other hormonal treatment.

Options

Patients should contact a private provider, such as on-line pharmacies, which can issue norethisterone to women following their own guidelines. The cost of the medication issued from the pharmacies can vary. Examples of pharmacies offering this service include:

- Boots – only women 18-54years not on contraceptive pill or other hormonal contraception
- Superdrug
- Lloyds
- Simple online pharmacy

The following online pharmacy is able to issue both norethisterone and medroxyprogesterone:

www.theonlineclinic.co.uk

Treatment options

- **Norethisterone 5mg tds**

Starting 3 days before expected onset of menstruation until no longer than needed

Studies have reported increased risk of VTE in women taking progestogens such as norethisterone in high dose. Further research has found that norethisterone is partially metabolised to ethinyloestradiol. This conversion is not important in low doses, but when taking at a daily dose of 10-20mg it's estimated to be equivalent to taking a 20-30mcg oral contraceptive pill. Apply the same risk assessment before prescribing this as with combined hormonal preparations.

- **Medroxyprogesterone 10mg bd - tds**

This is a safer alternative treatment to norethisterone, for those women at risk of VTE. It is not licensed for this use, so follow 'off label' prescribing rules.

The prescriber should use their own clinical judgement as to which preparation to use, taking into account the patient's age and associated risks. Prescriptions should be issued as **private** prescriptions, regardless of patient's age.

References

BNF. Issue 74; Sept 2017 – Mar 2018

GP notebook online – accessed 28.6.18

GP update – Red Whale online – accessed 28.6.18

Primary Care Women's Health Forum, e-update. Issue 9; July 2013