

HRT – Practical prescribing

Types of HRT

Estrogen

Estradiol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.5mg (combined only)/ 1mg / 2mg oral • 25mcg / 37.5mcg / 40mcg / 50mcg / 75mcg / 80mcg/ 100 mcg patches • 0.06% Oestrogel 0.75mg • 500mcg / 1mg Sandrena gel • 1-3 sprays Lenzetto • 10mcg vaginal tablets • 7.5mcg vaginal ring
Estriol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.1% / 0.01% vaginal creams, vaginal pessary, 50mcg/g vaginal gel
Conjugated estrogens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.3mg / 0.625mg / 1.25mg

Non-Estrogens

Gonadomimetic Tibolone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.5mg oral tablet (for systemic symptoms)
DHEA Prasterone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.5mg pessary (for genitourinary symptoms)
SERM Ospemifene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60mg oral tablet (for genitourinary symptoms)

Progestogens

Micronised progesterone	
Dydrogesterone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined only
Norethisterone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined only
Levonorgestrel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined and IUS
Norgestrel	
Medroxyprogesterone acetate	

Testosterone

Implants (off licence, limited availability)
Gel (off licence)

Routes of therapy

Oral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tablets (estrogen only, progestogen only, or combined), SERM (for urogenital atrophy)
Transdermal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patches (estrogen only or combined) / gels (estrogen only) / Spray (estrogen only)
Sub-cutaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implants (estrogen only, testosterone only, off licence, limited availability)
Vaginal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ring/tablets/creams/pessary/ gel (all estrogen only), DHEA
Intrauterine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUS (progestogen only)

Estradiol – equivalent doses*

	Ultra low	Low	Medium	High
Oral	0.5mg	1mg	2mg	3-4mg
Patch	Half 25	25	50	75-100
Gel-pump	½ pump	1 pump	2 pumps	3-4 pumps
Gel-sachet	½ x 0.5mg sachet - 0.25mg	0.5mg	1-1.5mg	2-3mg
Spray	1 spray	2 sprays	3 sprays	—

* The table has been drawn up as a practical guide based on a combination of pharmacokinetics, clinical trials and clinical experience. The dose equivalents are subject to significant individual variations in absorption and metabolism.

Not all suggested doses are within Summary of Product Characteristics, so if used, are used off licence.

Regimens**Estrogen only****Estrogen and progestogen**

- Sequential/cyclical preparations
- Continuous combined
- 3 monthly bleeds

Tibolone

- Hysterectomised patients
- If uterus is present
- Perimenopausal women
- Post menopausal women
- Perimenopausal women

Common side effects**Estrogen**

- Fluid retention
- Breast tenderness
- Bloating
- Nausea / Dyspepsia
- Headaches

Progestogens

- Fluid retention
- Breast tenderness
- Headaches
- Mood swings
- PMT-like symptoms

Dealing with side effects**Estrogen**

- Reduce dose
- Change route
- Change type
- Which hormone is causing the side effect?

Progestogens

- Change type
- Reduce dose if available
- Change route
- Alter duration

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