

Menopause Café
September 2021

Aftercare – everything
you need to know



September's Menopause Café focuses on Aftercare and everything you need to know once you've had a consultation with an OMC doctor and you've been prescribed HRT medication.

Questions we frequently get asked:

- How do I order my HRT medication and who do I order it from?
- How do I take my medication, how often and what time of day?
- How long does it take for me to see results?
- How much does HRT cost?
- What are the possible side effects of HRT?
- What do I do if I have symptoms after I start my HRT?

Further information can be found on the FAQ section of our website at <https://onlinemenopausecentre.com/faq/>



Ordering your HRT

Online Menopause Centre (OMC) work with several UK leading pharmacies.

- Your doctor will recommend a pharmacy for your HRT medication **during your consultation**
- **The pharmacy will use the email**, home address and telephone number you have provided to OMC for your medication order
- **The pharmacy will send you an email** and payment link to order and pay for your medication. Visa, Mastercard and Amex are all accepted. This is usually soon, and certainly within 48 hours, after your consultation.
- If you don't see the pharmacy's email in your inbox, try your junk mail folder. You can contact them directly. Their contact phone number will be at the end of your consultation summary.



Repeat Prescriptions (Rx)

If you would like to order a repeat prescription, please get in touch with the pharmacy who you initially ordered your medication with.

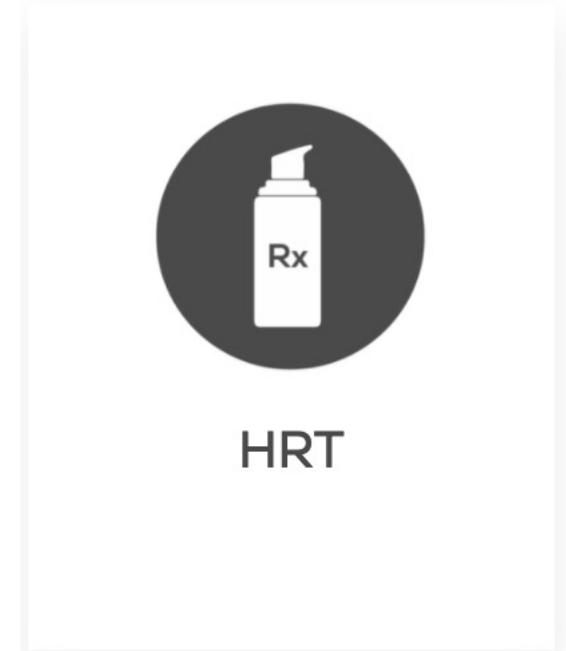
- The pharmacy's details will be on your consultation summary and the packaging of your medication
- You will need to book a Review consultation with your doctor at OMC once you have reached the end of your repeat prescription
- If you want to order all your repeats, discuss this with the pharmacy. They will advise as to how many repeats you can get at once
- Testosterone and DHEA are controlled drugs and therefore are subject to different rules. You must order them within 28 days of the prescription being signed



Prescriptions

Delivery of Prescriptions

- Allow up to **3 working days** for delivery of pre-made items and **up to 7 days** for compounded items (cBHRT) after payment.
- Should there be a stock issue, the pharmacy will notify you and provide an **approximate date for delivery or offer an alternative**.
- Our pharmacies dispatch medication via **Royal Mail or an overnight courier**. Discuss delivery options and preferences with them directly.
- Once dispensed, **medication cannot be returned or refunded** unless it is a defective product, or the pharmacy have dispensed incorrect products.
- Medication will not be refunded in circumstances where there is a reaction, you do not like it or no longer need it.



How to take HRT – General Info

- Wash your hands before and after taking hormones.
- Store your HRT at room temperature (15c-25c).
- If you forget to take your HRT, take it as soon as you remember and then continue as before. Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.
- Read the information leaflet you receive with your medication for more information.
- If you experience side effects, report to your doctor or pharmacist
- If you cannot get hold of your doctor, the pharmacist is also available to contact for more information and advice on your medication.



**General
Information**

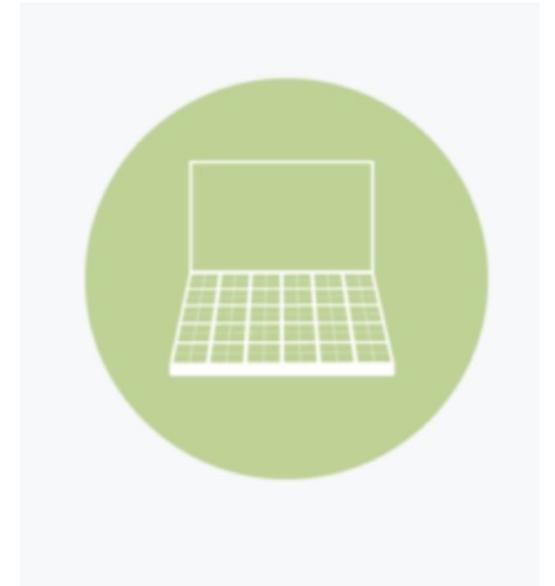
How to take HRT – Vaginal Creams

- Can be applied internally by using the applicator which comes with the cream or by using your finger.
- A small quantity of cream may remain on the applicator after use which is part of the prescribed dose. This depends on the removal technique.
- Occasionally, this cream can cause local irritation or individuals may not like the sensation of cream applied internally.
- Please note that this cream can be applied to inner thigh or groin area i.e. externally.
- If you have been prescribed Vagifem pessaries as well as vaginal cream, these can be used together. The intervals will be stated on your prescription and in the consultation summary which is sent to you at the end of every consultation.



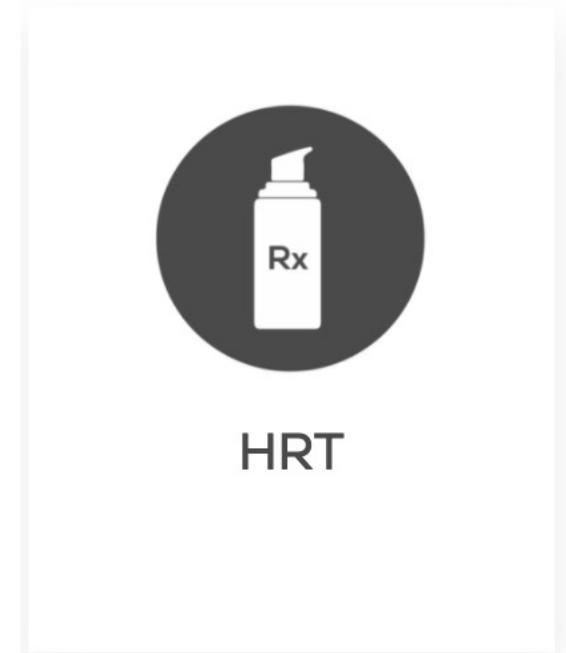
How to take HRT – Compounded Lozenges

- Lozenges come in trays of 30 small cubes each with scores in the shape of a + sign. Cut a cube of lozenge into four (along the + scores on reverse) using a knife.
- Usually prescribed as $\frac{1}{4}$ once a day or $\frac{1}{4}$ twice a day. Place the $\frac{1}{4}$ lozenge between your gum and cheek and allow it to absorb.
- This can take up to 30-40 minutes and partly depends on the rate of saliva production. During the time it is absorbing please do not chew, suck, or swallow the lozenge.
- Avoid food and drinks for half an hour after it has been completely absorbed.
- If you are thirsty and need to drink, use a straw, or take small sips that can be swallowed quickly rather than keeping the water in your mouth for longer which dissolves the lozenge.



How to take HRT – Compounded Creams

- Compounded HRT cream is usually prescribed as 1 pump once a day or 1 pump twice a day.
- Press the nozzle of cream down firmly to dispense one measure of the cream.
- Apply the cream to inner part of your forearm.
- Use your other forearm to rub the cream into your skin for 30-40 seconds.
- Please avoid using any other products like body lotion or perfume on that area
- Pull and leave your sleeves up to avoid wiping the cream off.



Utrogestan capsules

- A licenced progesterone only capsule that your doctor may have prescribed
- Occasionally, can be difficult to swallow
- Place the capsule in the centre of your tongue, near the back and drink a large glass of water to assist swallowing.



Estrogen Patches, Gels & Sprays

- Please refer to the medication information leaflet included with these on tips about how to take them.

Vaginal Bleeding / Spotting

- You may need to have a pelvic ultrasound to assess the thickness of the lining of the womb (endometrial thickness) and general health of your gynaecological organs.
- We may also ask you to have some blood. We can help you organise these tests.

Breast Tenderness

- If you are experiencing intense tenderness in your breasts, please inform us so we can assist you.
- We may ask you to reduce or stop your HRT or to take a supplement like oil of evening primrose to help. We always check with you the last breast screening (mammogram) you have had so it is useful to have this information at hand.



Report any side effects by emailing us:
info@onlinemenopausecentre.com
or call us on 020 8126 3440.

- If you are experiencing new symptoms or worsening of your existing symptoms and it has been 30 days or more since your last consultation, please Book a Review Consultation.
- This will give you and your doctor time to discuss these symptoms, arrange any necessary investigations and to adjust your HRT appropriately.



Appointments

Report any new or worsening symptoms by emailing us:
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or call us on 020 8126 3440.

Taking HRT

- Do I carry on taking a 3-day break every month?
- What is the best time to take the hormones?
- What's the best way to rub in the Sandrena gel?
- How do I take my medication, how often and what time of day?
- What does it mean if I don't get a period after my progesterone 12 days?
- What is the upper age to take HRT?

Symptoms & Side Effects:

- Do hormones fluctuate even with HRT? How do we know that symptoms returning are temporary?
- What do I do if I have some bleeding after I start taking HRT?
- Is it unusual to get acne when on HRT?
- Can you feel worse on HRT and are there natural alternatives?
- What do I do if I have symptoms after I start my HRT?
- What to expect when increasing your dosage and how long would symptoms take to settle?
- Is it true that in the future if you stop taking HRT you go through the menopause anyway?
- How long does it take to gain more energy after starting to use testosterone?

Your Questions (2)

Ordering HRT:

- How do I order my HRT medication and who do I order it from?
- Can I get my medication on the NHS by prescription?

Blood tests

- For blood tests, you are asked to take your HRT no more than 4-6 hours before. But you are also advised to take HRT at night-time. What is the best way to reconcile this conflicting ?
- What is the procedure for taking the blood test and to whom do we send the results? Do we find our own local clinic and request a specific type of blood test?

HRT Medication

- What do all the other hormones mean that are on our report and how important are they (for instance FSH)?
- Can we take supplements and are there any that might clash with HRT? (e.g. can we take magnesium)

Taking HRT

- Explain difference between BHRT AND HRT how do I know which one I've been prescribed
- Do you have to wean yourself of HRT gradually if you want to stop taking it?
- How to make sure I'm taking the Sandrina and the Testosterone creams at the same time with maximum chance they are properly absorbed. Use of body lotions at that time - yes or no?



Thank you