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across North Yorkshire and York

# **Vaginal Misoprostol prior to Contraceptive coil Insertion**

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact us on  
01904 721111

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**The name of the treatment you have been prescribed is misoprostol**

## **What is misoprostol used for?**

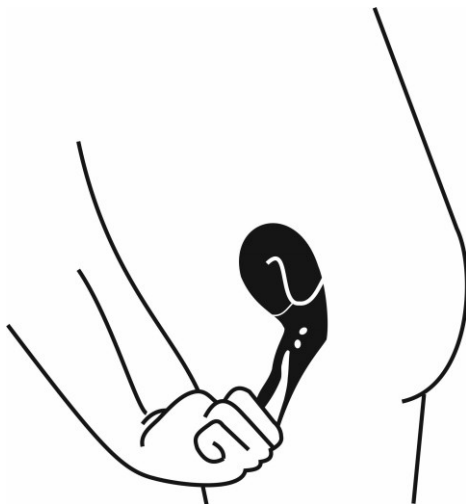
Misoprostol is used to open up the neck of the womb/uterus before inserting an intrauterine device (commonly called an IUD or contraceptive coil). It makes the coil insertion easier and may be helpful in women who have never had a baby or have experienced problems with coil insertion in the past.

## How is it used?

Misoprostol is an oral tablet which is usually used for the treatment of stomach ulcers. When used to dilate the cervix, it is inserted into the vagina.

The dose used is two tablets of 200 micrograms inserted high up in the posterior part of the vagina three hours before the appointment to have your IUD fitted.

1. Do a home pregnancy test to make 100 percent sure that you are not pregnant
2. Wash your hands
3. Remove the tablets from the foil wrapping
4. Lie down with your knees bent and legs apart
5. Gently insert two tablets into the posterior part of the vagina as high up as possible using your fingers
6. Remain in this position for 15 minutes to allow time for the tablets to be absorbed
7. Wash your hands



## **Are there any side effects?**

When misoprostol is inserted into the vagina the following side effects have been reported: feeling sick, lower abdominal pain or cramps, light vaginal bleeding, feeling of an increase in body temperature, fever and loose bowels. Usually, the side effects are mild and short lasting. But if severe, remove the tablets from the vagina and seek medical help.

Misoprostol tablets do not currently hold a product license for vaginal use before IUD insertion.

# What is product license?

A government department, the Medicine and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), issues product licenses. In order to obtain a license, the manufacturer or importer of a medicine provides evidence to the MHRA to show that the medicine works for the illness to be treated, does not have too many side effects and is made to a high standard. Obtaining a license takes a long time and can be very expensive.

Although misoprostol tablets have a product license for treatment of stomach ulcers, the manufacturers have not yet applied for a license for their use prior to IUD insertion or for vaginal use. There is, however, plenty of evidence that vaginal misoprostol is safe and effective for dilating the neck of the womb prior to certain procedures such as: examination of the womb/uterus with a camera, inducing labour and termination of pregnancy and is hence widely used worldwide for these indications. Due to its wide-ranging applications in reproductive health, misoprostol is on the World Health Organization Model List of Essential Medicines

Clinicians may prescribe medicines that do not have a product license. Your clinician is aware that misoprostol tablets do not hold a product license for this use but feels that they may be of help to you.

## **Who can I contact for further information?**

For more information on the use of misoprostol prior to IUD insertion contact the doctor responsible for this treatment.

## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Nikki Foster, Service Manager, Yorsexual Health, Monkgate Health Centre, 31-35 Monkgate, York, YO31 7PB, telephone 01904 725442, email [Nikki.foster4@nhs.net](mailto:Nikki.foster4@nhs.net)

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

# Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

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