

## Combination Hormones for Women

### Hormone therapy may include one or more of the following medications:

- Progesterone, estradiol, estriol, estrone, pregnenolone, DHEA, or testosterone.
  - Any of these hormones can be prescribed for either women or men. This leaflet covers hormone therapy for women. Talk to your doctor to understand why this particular combination of hormones was prescribed for you and what your expected outcomes should be.
- The names of the drugs your doctor ordered may be shortened to fit on the prescription label. Some pharmacies may abbreviate differently. This is a list of abbreviations commonly used at our pharmacy.
  - Progesterone = Prog or P
  - Testosterone = Test or T
  - Estradiol = E2
  - Estriol = E3
  - Estrone = E1
  - Bi-Estrogen = BI-EST = Estradiol and Estriol = E2E3
  - Tri-Estrogen = TRI-EST = Estrone, Estradiol, Estriol = E1E2E3
  - Pregnenolone = Preg or Pregnen
  - Dehydroepiandrosterone = DHEA

### Benefits

- Possible benefits for women may include improvement in skin health, vaginal dryness, urinary incontinence, cardiovascular (lipid profile), sleep, emotional well-being, sensory function, memory/mental activity, prevention of osteoporosis, improved libido, and improvement of thyroid function, blood sugar and mineral balance.
  - Doctors may prescribe medications for off-label use, meaning the FDA has not approved the medication to treat that specific condition. Ask your pharmacist or physician if you have any questions regarding the use of your medication.
- The amount of time it takes to see the full effects of the medication varies between each patient. Consult your prescriber for additional information.

### Side Effects

- Side effects vary among patients. Some common side effects may include breast tenderness, increased cholesterol, unusual behavior, aggressive behavior, emotional imbalance, facial hair growth, headache, sleepiness.
  - Some of the side effects listed above may also be symptoms of hormone imbalance. It is very important that you discuss all these symptoms with your physician.
- Severe side effects are rare but may occur. Severe side effects could include rapid heart rate, chest pain, severe or sudden onset of headache, swelling in the extremities, heavy bleeding, or breast lumps, are possible serious side effects.
  - If you experience a severe side effect while taking this medication, please call your physician immediately. You may also report the side effect to the FDA Med-Watch Program at 1-800-FDA-1088.

### Administration

- Always follow the directions on your prescription label on how to take your medication.
- Oral Forms
  - Capsule: swallow whole, do not crush or chew.
  - Tablet: follow the directions on your prescription.
  - Oral liquid: swallow prescribed amount using measuring tool provided.
  - Sublingual tablet: place under the tongue and let tablet dissolve.
- Suppositories: unwrap and insert into designated area.
  - Do not swallow this medication. If this medication is accidentally swallowed, contact 911.
  - For more information on how to administer a suppository, refer to the label on your medication or talk to your pharmacist.
- Topical: clean and dry the designated area, then apply the recommended amount of medication to the area and rub in well for 2 minutes. After administration, wash your hands thoroughly to prevent transferring the medication onto others.
- Vaginally: Insert the vaginal cream, tablet or suppository using the applicator provided with your medication. Press the plunger to dispense the medication.



1274 Anna J Stepp Rd. Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
855-GOO-BLUE (855-466-2583) Toll Free Phone  
855-445-1119 Toll Free Fax  
info@valiantrx.com  
www.valiantrx.com

- Your physician prescribed this medication based on results of your lab work and hormone levels. It is important that you apply or take your medication consistently as prescribed.

### **Additional Information/Warnings**

Testosterone can be transferred by skin-to-skin contact. Testosterone can cause negative side effects in children who contact skin after the medication has been applied. If exposed to testosterone children may develop aggressive behavior, enlarged genitals, and pubic hair. Testosterone is especially dangerous for pregnant women because it can cause birth defects.

To prevent these problems, don't allow skin-to-skin contact of the treated area with other people. Keep the treated area covered with loose clothing until the medication is absorbed, about 4 hours. Hand washing does not remove all the drug residue from your skin. It is best to apply medication with a disposable glove. Ask your pharmacist about any questions or concerns you might have.

- If you miss a dose of this medication, take it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not take 2 doses at once. If you have any questions, please contact your physician or pharmacist.
- Alcohol may cause an increase in sedation in combination with certain hormones. Please discuss the use of alcohol with your prescriber or pharmacist. Sometimes progesterone is taken at bedtime to help with sleep problems associated with menopause.
- Your obstetrician should guide the use of hormones during pregnancy. If you discover you are pregnant and are taking hormones, call your doctor or obstetrician immediately to determine if you should discontinue your therapy.
  - Some of the medications listed may be contraindicated and some may be beneficial for use during pregnancy. It is important to discuss this with your medical care team.
  - It is important that you inform your prescriber if you are breastfeeding.



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- Combination hormone therapies should be closely monitored. Inform your doctor if you change your medication protocol or add/discontinue over-the-counter products. Do not stop abruptly. Talk to your doctor about a gradual decrease in hormone treatments.
- Certain medical procedures may require you to stop using your medications a week or two prior to your procedure. To reduce the chance of unwanted side effects, discuss medication changes with your prescriber.
- If you have gained or lost more than twenty pounds, your hormone dose may need to be adjusted. Contact your prescriber.
- Hormone therapy medications can interact with other medications. If you started a new medication and are taking hormones, contact your prescriber to determine if there are any possible drug interactions.
- Before taking this medication, tell your healthcare provider about all the medications you are currently taking including prescription medications, herbal supplements, vitamins, and over-the-counter medications.
- Continue to have routine appointments with your physician to assess and monitor your response to the medication and condition as recommended.
- Do not share medication with another person, even if they have the same symptoms you are experiencing.
- The information in this patient advisory leaflet is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, drug interactions, or adverse effects. If you have questions about the medicines, you are taking or would like more information, check with your doctor or pharmacist.
- This compound medication is customized for the patient and is exclusively available with the prescription from a prescriber.
- Please refer to receipt for a list of ingredients in your medication.

#### **Storage**

- Refer to the label on your prescription for refrigeration requirements (do not freeze).
  - If refrigeration is NOT required- store medication at room temperature in a cool, dry place. Do not store it in the bathroom, a vehicle, or any other location with varying temperatures or humidity.



COMPounding PHARMACY 1274 Anna J Stepp Rd. Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
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- If refrigeration is required, store in the refrigerator out of reach of children.
- Compounded medications are not usually prepared in child resistant containers and should be kept away from children and pets. If you would like to have a lockable zip lock bag for your compounded medications, please call the pharmacy and ask the technician to include child resistant packaging with your refills.
- Unused medications left in the medicine cabinet can be a temptation for children and teenagers. Discard unused medications promptly. Do not flush drugs down the toilet or into the sink drain as they could be hazardous to the environment. Contact your local disposal company for more details about how to safely discard medications when they are expired or no longer needed. Big Red Barrel and Yellow Jug are national drug disposal programs. Visit [www.bigredbarrel.com](http://www.bigredbarrel.com)

#### **Prescription Expiration & Medication Beyond Use Date**

- Refer to the label for the expiration date of your prescription.
  - Your prescription expires in two ways:
    - You have used all the refills prescribed.
    - The prescription has reached the expiration date of one year (six months for testosterone, which is a schedule III-controlled drug).
  - When a prescription expires, allow plenty of time to visit your doctor and for the pharmacist to compound your prescription renewal.
- Refer to the *discard date* or *beyond use date* on your bottle to learn when your medication should be discarded. Compounded medications have a shorter shelf life than those of manufactured drugs. The beyond use date is the longest date we can guarantee full potency of your medication.

**Please contact Valiant Compounding Pharmacy at 734-545-1117 or toll free at 855-466-2583 with any questions, concerns, or for prescription refills.**