



## Local oestrogen a treatment option for vaginal atrophy

### Clinical question

Should I prescribe local oestrogen for postmenopausal women with vaginal atrophy?

### Bottom line

Oestrogen creams, pessaries, tablets and the oestradiol vaginal ring are equally effective for relieving the symptoms of vaginal atrophy and are more effective than placebo and non-hormonal gels. However, women seem to favour the oestradiol vaginal ring for ease of use, comfort and overall satisfaction.

### Caveat

Conjugated equine oestrogen cream is more likely than oestradiol tablets to cause uterine bleeding, breast pain and perineal pain (NNH\*10). Compared to the oestradiol ring this cream is also more likely to cause endometrial overstimulation (NNH 14).

\* NNH = number needed to treat to cause harm in one individual

### Context

Vaginal atrophy is a common condition in postmenopausal women, causing vaginal dryness, itching, discomfort and dyspareunia. Systemic treatment in the form of oral hormone replacement therapy is not always necessary – several local oestrogen preparations are available.

### Cochrane Systematic Review

Suckling J et al. Local oestrogen for vaginal atrophy in postmenopausal women. Cochrane Reviews 2006, Issue 4, Article No. CD001500.

*Note: this review contains 19 trials and 4162 participants.*

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