

Treatment Used For Period Problems

Women's Services Patient Information

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about different treatments for period problems

Following your appointment it has been suggested that you can be treated with tablets for your period problems. This leaflet describes, below, the tablets that your specialist may suggest. This is to help you understand how they work and let you to talk to your specialist about them if you wish.

What type of period problems are the tablets used for?

- if the womb lining is thick
- a slight hormonal balance
- some women that have pain with their periods, irregular periods or bleeding in between their periods

What types of tablets are used for period problems?

There are several different types, some of the tablets may not be suitable for all women. After discussion with your specialist, taking your health needs and wishes into consideration the most suitable choice of tablet can be offered.

Tranexamic Acid: Controls heavy periods by stopping your body breaking down blood clots too quickly. It is in a group of drugs call antifibrinolytic agents. You take it during heavy days of bleeding. You cannot take this drug if you have had a thrombosis, a blood clot, in the past.

Mefenamic acid: This is particularly useful for painful periods. It is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), in the same group of pain killers as Ibuprofen. Like other NSAIDs, you should not take this drug if you have asthma, a stomach ulcer or excess stomach acid problems. You can take it during your periods or you can start the day before if you are expecting pain.

Progestins such as: Norethisterone, Dydrogesterone, Medroxyprogesterone:

These are used to give you a more regular cycle. These are artificial hormones, related to your natural female hormone progesterone and they work by stopping the womb lining becoming too thick. You have to take them in a regular cyclical pattern. Usually taking the tablets for 3 weeks and then having 1 week off. They can cause headaches or bloating in some women similar to pre-menstrual symptoms, but most women have no side effects. Although these tablets are not contraceptives, they could reduce your chances of becoming pregnant whilst you are taking them.

Combined oral contraceptives, the pill:

This can be used to make the periods more regular, less painful and lighter and is not given to women solely to prevent pregnancy. You take it for 3 weeks in every 4 and it works by stopping your body releasing an egg every month. This stops your body releasing hormones which make the womb lining thicken. The side effects are mainly hormonal and usually settle after a short time. Women can take the pill up until the age of 50, but may need to stop it sooner, around age 35, or not take it at all if you smoke, are overweight or have had blood clots in the past.

Levonogesterel bearing Intrauterine system (LNG- IUS) (Mirena©, Levosert™):

The Mirena and Levosert are plastic devices similar to the contraceptive coil, however they carry some artificial progesterone hormone on them. The LNG-IUS releases a small amount of the hormone every day and keeps the lining of the womb thin. This is similar to the progestin mentioned in this leaflet. It is good at treating heavy periods. With 85% of women who have them stating that their periods are lighter, about half of these women will have no period at all. They last for 5 years and have a contraceptive failure rate of 1 in 1000 – 2000. Women using the LNG-IUS may experience some irregular bleeding, crampy pain at the time of insertion. This can usually be successfully treated with over the counter medication such as paracetamol or Ibuprofen and will settle down). There will be occasional cramps around the time of the period.

Accessible Information

If you need this information in another format or language, please ask a member of staff.

Smoking

Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke-free organisation. You are not permitted to smoke or use e-cigarettes in any of the hospital buildings or grounds.