

Information for prescribers

About Oestradiol:

Oestradiol gel is approved in Aotearoa New Zealand for: Menopausal Hormonal Therapy (MHT) for oestrogen deficiency symptoms in postmenopausal women, and prevention of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women at high risk of future fractures who are unable to take other types of medicine for the prevention of osteoporosis. **This bulletin is for the use of MHT in postmenopausal women.**

Clinical advice that Pharmac have received indicates that oestradiol gel may also be used for oestradiol-based gender affirming hormone therapy, and for premature ovarian insufficiency. Use of oestradiol gel outside of approved indications needs to be prescribed and supplied under Section 25 of the Medicines Act 1981.

Dosing and formulation:

Each metered dose pump contains 1.25g gel containing 0.75mg oestradiol. The product available in New Zealand is EstroGel 0.06% gel. Initial dose of 1-2 pumps daily is to be reviewed after one month, and according to response, doses should increase by one pump (0.75mg) per month to a maximum of 4 pumps (3mg) daily. Once relief from menopausal symptoms is achieved, reduce dose to lowest effective dose. *NB: long-term safety of topical oestradiol gel **above** 1.5mg (2 pumps) daily has not been established.*

Changing from another MHT

If the person is already using another type of oestrogen therapy, and has a period, the usual oestrogen pack should be finished first before starting EstroGel. If EstroGel is the first MHT for the person, or the person is switching from a period-free MHT, EstroGel can be started on any day.

MHT dose-equivalence

Dosing is approximately equivalent to oral and patch 17B-estradiol formulations – see table. Other names for 17B-estradiol formulations include estradiol (E2), oestrogen, oestradiol. The oral 17B-estradiol in the table above include the partially subsidised Estrofem 1mg and 2mg, while the 17B-estradiol patches include all funded estradiol patches (Estraderm, Estradot, etc.)

Estradiol-approximate equivalent doses				
		Low	Medium	High
Oral	17B estradiol	0.5mg	1mg	2mg
Patch	17B estradiol	25mcg	50mcg	75-100mcg
Gel (pump)	estradiol hemihydrate	1 pump 0.75mg	2 pumps 1.5mg	3-4 pumps 2.25-3mg
Gel (sachet)	estradiol	1/2 sachet 0.5mg	1 sachet 1mg	2-3 sachet 2-3mg

REFERENCES: <https://healthify.nz/medicines-a-z/o/oestrogen-gel/> https://nzf.org.nz/nzf_70042
<https://www.femalegp.co.nz/health-knowledgebase/perimenopause/1>