**Utrogestan supply issues: what you need to know**

**Utrogestan, what is it?**

Utrogestan is a type of progestogen known as micronised progesterone. It is derived from the yam, a root vegetable, and is identical in structure to the body’s hormone, progesterone. Because of this, it is often referred to as being ‘body identical’.

It’s crucial that you take a progestogen as part of your HRT regime if you still have a womb (uterus). This is because taking oestrogen can cause the lining of your womb to build up over time which ultimately can cause cancer. Taking a progestogen such as Utrogestan prevents this occurring and reduces associated risks.

**What is the issue?**

Due to the rising demand for HRT the manufacturers of Utrogestan are struggling to keep up. Consequently, there is currently very limited stock. A Serious Shortage Protocol was initiated in May 2023 to enable more women to have access to it but we are still experiencing times when we are told there is simply none available. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said Utrogestan is expected to be in intermittent supply until late 2023.

**Are there any alternatives to Utrogestan?**

There is no identical match to Utrogestan but there are other progestogens which can be used in its place.

We are following guidelines from the British Menopause Society and the most direct replacement for Utrogestan is to use a progestogen called Medroxyprogesterone acetate. This is a synthetic hormone, in tablet form, so not body identical and does come with more cautions.

You should not use Medroxyprogesterone if you are lactose intolerant, pregnant, or if you have liver disease, a hormone-related cancer such as breast or uterine cancer, a history of stroke or blood clot, or abnormal vaginal bleeding that has not been checked by a doctor.

There are other alternatives which can be used, such as a mirena coil or changing to a combined patch.

 **If you wish to discuss this further then please contact the surgery for an appointment.**