

Informulary

Great news about your drug plan!

Mifegymiso Newsletter

Key Contributor: Michael Boivin, Pharmacist Consultant

What is Mifegymiso?

Mifegymiso is a combination of two different medications and used to medically terminate pregnancy (at an early stage). The first medication, mifepristone blocks the effects of a hormone called progesterone.¹ This hormone is needed for a pregnancy to continue. It is combined with a medication called misoprostol that causes the uterus to contract.¹

How is Mifegymiso used?

Mifegymiso can be used to medically terminate a developing early pregnancy.² It can be taken up to 49 days from the first day of the last menstrual period.¹ Mifegymiso has been shown to be 95-98% effective at medically terminating early pregnancy.¹

It is important to remember that Mifegymiso is NOT intended for routine use as a contraceptive.¹

Who should not take Mifegymiso?

Mifegymiso is only approved to be taken in the first 49 days since the first day of the last period. Because of the effects of these medications, it is not recommended in women who:^{1,2}

- have an ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the uterus)
- have an intrauterine device (IUD) in place (it must be removed before taking Mifegymiso)
- have chronic adrenal failure (the adrenal glands are near the kidney)
- are on concurrent long-term corticosteroid therapy (e.g., prednisone)
- have bleeding disorders or using anticoagulation (blood thinning) therapy
- have inherited porphyria (rare genetic condition)
- have uncontrolled asthma

How is Mifegymiso prescribed and distributed in Canada?

Not every doctor can prescribe Mifegymiso. In Canada, a doctor needs to complete a mandatory education program before they prescribe this medication. Before writing the prescription, the doctor will want to know the information regarding the individual's last menstrual cycle and will likely order an ultrasound to make sure there is not an ectopic pregnancy.¹ The physician will also have the woman sign a written informed consent to take the drug and book a follow-up appointment in 7 to 14 days.¹

Unlike any other prescription medication, Mifegymiso must be purchased from the physician's office and cannot be bought at the local pharmacy at this time.² It is illegal to provide this medication over the internet and women should not purchase Mifegymiso online as it may not contain the correct drugs.





How is Mifegymiso taken?

The two different drugs in Mifegymiso must be taken in a specific sequence. A mifepristone tablet is swallowed first. After 24 to 48 hours, four tablets of misoprostol are put between the cheek and gum (cheek pouch) for 30 minutes and any remaining bits of the tablet are swallowed with water.¹

What are the side effects of Mifegymiso?

Cramping and vaginal bleeding are expected effects of taking Mifegymiso.² In some cases, very heavy vaginal bleeding will need to be stopped by a surgical procedure, which can often be performed in the physician's office.² Other common side effects of Mifegymiso include nausea, weakness, fever/chills, vomiting, headache, diarrhea, and dizziness in the first day or two after taking the two medicines.²

Very rarely, serious cases of bacterial infection have been reported in some women taking Mifegymiso.¹ If a woman experiences abdominal pain or discomfort, weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or fever 24 hours after taking the second set of pills (misoprostol), she should see her doctor immediately to rule out this serious infection.¹

When can a woman who has taken Mifegymiso become pregnant?

A woman immediately returns to fertility after taking Mifegymiso.¹ Women are advised to avoid conception and use a contraceptive immediately after taking Mifegymiso for at least one menstrual cycle. This is because it is important to make sure that the two drugs in Mifegymiso (mifepristone and misoprostol) are out of the woman's system, so as to avoid exposing a subsequent pregnancy to Mifegymiso and risk terminating the pregnancy.¹

What are the main points for women considering Mifegymiso?

- Mifegymiso will only be prescribed and distributed by select doctors who have completed the additional training
- It can only be used up to 49 days after the start of the last period
- It should **NEVER** be purchased online and women should follow the specific instructions provided by their physician
- Vaginal bleeding and cramping is very common but signs of weakness, fever, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting should be reported to the prescribing physician
- A woman returns to fertility after taking Mifegymiso and should use a method of contraception for at least one cycle after taking Mifegymiso
- It is important that all women follow-up with their doctor 7 to 14 days after taking Mifegymiso

Mifegymiso will be added to the Reformulary as of February 2017. 

References

1. Linepharma International Limited. Mifegymiso Product Monograph. London, England: Linepharma International Limited; 2016.
2. Food and Drug Administration. [Postmarket Drug Safety Information for Patients and Providers - Questions and Answers on Mifeprex](#). Accessed October 30, 2016.

For more information, please visit Reformulary.com/Resources