



Refills

Your dose of drug information in between sessions

Prasterone (Intrarosa®) for the Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause (GSM)

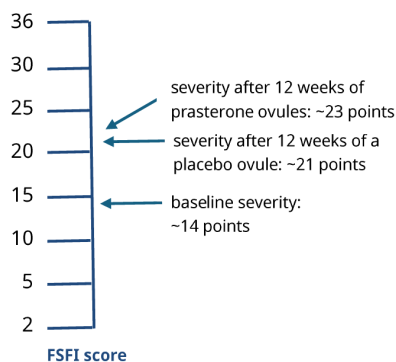
The BC Provincial Academic Detailing (PAD) service's topic [Medications for menopause-associated vasomotor and genitourinary symptoms](#) delivers evidence and practical drug information for the most commonly prescribed estrogen and progestogen products (oral, transdermal, vaginal).¹ Visit www.bcpad.ca to [book a session](#) with an academic detailing pharmacist in your area.

We received this question during PAD sessions: Does vaginal prasterone offer an additional advantage on measures of sexual dysfunction compared to vaginal estrogen products accessible in the National Pharmacare formulary (Plan NP)?

Basics 1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prasterone (also known as dehydroepiandrosterone or DHEA) is an inactive prodrug which is converted intracellularly into estrogens and androgens in vaginal cells It was approved by Health Canada based on two 12-week trials which demonstrated improvements in dyspareunia and vaginal dryness associated with GSM in postmenopausal women The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada's 2021 guideline states that prasterone also improves sexual dysfunction but does not quantify the magnitude of the treatment effect
Comparisons 5,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada's Drug Agency's 2022 review of prasterone did not identify exceptional benefits for prasterone compared to other available treatments but it has not been compared directly to the two vaginal estrogen products currently listed on Plan NP (Premarin®, Imvexxy®). Review the table below for cost comparison It has been compared directly to Vagifem® in a small trial, but methodologic limitations preclude drawing confident conclusions on the results (e.g., open label, single center, non-standardized outcomes)

What is the effect of vaginal prasterone ovules on sexual dysfunction in women with GSM?⁷

In one of the 12-week drug approval trials, the impact of prasterone on sexual dysfunction was assessed as a secondary outcome using the Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI) questionnaire. FSFI includes six domains: desire, arousal, lubrication, orgasm, satisfaction and pain. The total score ranges from 2 to 36 with higher scores indicating better or improved sexual function. Participants were postmenopausal women (mean age 60) with moderate to severe dyspareunia.



- From a baseline score of approximately 14 points, participants in the prasterone group achieved scores of approximately 23 after 12 weeks, compared to approximately 21 points in the placebo group
- In both groups, the average final score achieved remained within the definition of female sexual dysfunction (total score < 26.55)
- Prasterone has not been studied in women with a diagnosis of low sexual desire in the absence of moderate to severe genitourinary symptoms

Table ⁸⁻¹⁰	Premarin cream	Imvexxy softgel inserts	Intrarosa ovules
Active ingredient	Conjugated equine estrogens	Estradiol	Prasterone
Cost per month	~\$10-40	~\$30	~\$55
PharmaCare coverage	regular benefit (Plan NP)*	regular benefit (Plan NP)*	non-benefit

*100% coverage (no cost to patient)

¹BC PAD Service Medications for Menopause-Associated Vasomotor and Genitourinary Symptoms (May 2025); ²[Health Canada Drug Product Database Intrarosa](#); ³[Health Canada Clinical Information Intrarosa](#); ⁴Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada JOGC 2021 (PMID:34649681); ⁵[Canada's Drug Agency Intrarosa](#); ⁶Strandberg Maturitas (PMID:41903372); ⁷Labrie J Sex Med 2015 (PMID:26597311); ⁸Health Canada Drug Product Database; ⁹Cost: does not include mark-up or professional fee, calculated from McKesson Canada PharmaClik March 1, 2026;

¹⁰BC PharmaCare Formulary [Plan NP menopausal hormone therapy](#)