

## PATIENT INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION: What is OESCLIM®?

### OESCLIM®

25, 37.5, 50, 75 or 100 microgrammes/24 hours

Transdermal System (patch)

#### Serious Warnings and Precautions

The Women's Health Initiative (WHI) trial examined the health benefits and risks of combined *estrogen plus progestin* therapy (n=16,608) and *estrogen-alone therapy* (n=10,739) in postmenopausal women aged 50 to 79 years.<sup>3, 30, 31</sup>

The *estrogen plus progestin* arm of the WHI trial indicated an increased risk of *myocardial infarction* (MI), *stroke*, *invasive breast cancer*, *pulmonary emboli* and *deep vein thrombosis* in postmenopausal women receiving treatment with combined conjugated equine estrogens (CEE, 0.625 mg/day) and medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA, 2.5 mg/day) for 5.2 years compared to those receiving placebo.<sup>31</sup>

The *estrogen-alone* arm of the WHI trial indicated an increased risk of *stroke* and *deep vein thrombosis* in hysterectomized women treated with CEE-alone (0.625 mg/day) for 6.8 years compared to those receiving placebo.<sup>30</sup>

Therefore, the following should be given serious consideration at the time of prescribing:

- Estrogens with or without progestins should not be prescribed for primary or secondary prevention of cardiovascular diseases.
- Estrogens with or without progestins should be prescribed at the lowest effective dose for the approved indication.
- Estrogens with or without progestins should be prescribed for the shortest period possible for the approved indication.

OESCLIM® is a transdermal system which contains estradiol, a natural estrogen.

Your doctor has prescribed OESCLIM® for you after a careful review of your medical needs. Use it only as directed and do not give it to anyone else. Oesclim® should be used only under the supervision of a doctor, with regular follow-up at least once a year to identify side effects associated with its use. Your first follow-up visit should be within 3 to 6 months of starting treatment. Your visit may include a blood pressure check, a breast exam, a Pap

smear and a pelvic exam. You should have a mammogram before starting treatment and at regular intervals as recommended by your doctor, and check your breasts regularly for lumps. Your doctor may recommend some blood tests.

You should carefully discuss the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) with your doctor. You should talk regularly with your doctor about whether you still need treatment with HRT.

**INDICATIONS: OESCLIM® is approved for use in the following situations:**

OESCLIM® has been given to you to relieve symptoms due to the lack of estrogen that occurs during or after menopause or because of surgery (see explanation below).

**Estrogens**

1. Estrogens are used to reduce moderate or severe menopausal symptoms. Your body normally makes estrogens and progestins (female hormones) mainly in the ovaries. Between the ages of 45-55, the ovaries gradually stop making estrogens. This leads to a decrease in body estrogen levels and a natural menopause (the end of monthly menstrual periods). If both ovaries are removed during an operation before natural menopause takes place, the sudden decrease in estrogen levels causes “surgical menopause”. Menopause is not a disease; it is a natural life event and different women experience menopause and its symptoms differently. Not all women experience the obvious symptoms of estrogen deficiency. When the estrogen levels begin decreasing, some women develop very uncomfortable symptoms, such as feelings of warmth in the face, neck and chest, or sudden intense episodes of heat and sweating (“hot flashes” or “hot flashes”). Using estrogen drugs can help the body adjust to lower estrogen levels and reduce these symptoms.
2. Estrogens are used to treat vulval and vaginal atrophy. Some women may also develop vulval or vaginal atrophy (itching, burning or dryness in or around the vagina, difficulty or burning on urination) in association with menopause. These changes may be improved by estrogen therapy.

**Progestins**

Progestins used in hormone replacement therapy are similar to the female sex hormone progesterone. During the childbearing years, progesterone is responsible for the regulation of the menstrual cycle. The estradiol delivered by OESCLIM® not only relieves your menopausal symptoms, but like estrogens produced by your body, may also stimulate growth of the inner lining of the uterus, the endometrium. In menopausal and post-menopausal women with an intact uterus, stimulation of growth of the endometrium may result in irregular bleeding. In some cases this may progress into a disorder of the uterus known as endometrial hyperplasia (overgrowth of the lining of the uterus). Endometrial hyperplasia increases the risk of developing endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus).

The development of estrogen-mediated disorders of the uterus can be reduced if a progestin is given regularly for a certain number of days with your estrogen replacement therapy. Each cycle of progestin administration should include a periodic bleeding, whereby the inner lining of the uterus is regularly shed, thus protecting against endometrial hyperplasia.

If your uterus has been surgically removed, endometrial hyperplasia cannot occur and cyclic administration of a progestin is not necessary.

## **RESTRICTIONS ON USE: WHO SHOULDN'T TAKE OESCLIM®:**

Certain medical conditions may be aggravated by estrogens; therefore estrogens should not be used at all or should be used with precaution under these conditions.

**Estrogens should not be used during pregnancy.**

**Estrogen should not be used if you are breast-feeding.**

Before using OESCLIM®, be sure to tell your doctor if you have ever had any of the following medical problems. OESCLIM® should not be used if you have any of the following conditions:

- allergic or unusual reaction to any of the ingredients of OESCLIM® (see section called Pharmaceutical Information)
- active liver disease
- a personal history of breast cancer or endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus)
- undiagnosed or unusual vaginal bleeding
- known or suspected pregnancy
- stroke, heart attack, or coronary heart disease
- migraine headaches
- active or personal history of venous thromboembolism (blood clots in the large veins or lungs) or thrombophlebitis (inflammation of the veins)
- partial or complete loss of vision due to blood vessel disease of the eye
- porphyria (a disease of blood pigment)
- endometrial hyperplasia (overgrowth of the lining of the uterus)

## **ADVERSE EFFECTS**

Like all medications, OESCLIM® may cause side effects. The most frequently reported side effect is redness or irritation under or around the patch.

The second most frequent adverse reactions were symptoms of specific estrogen therapy intolerance.

The following effects have been reported in women using estrogens (these include estrogens used for birth control). Check with your doctor if these symptoms become troublesome.

- nausea
- retention of fluid
- migraine headaches
- localized darkening of the skin
- breast tenderness and excessive vaginal secretions (may be a sign that too much estrogen is taken)
- persistent upper abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, tender abdomen (may be signs of gallbladder disease)
- easy bruising, excessive nose bleeds, excessive heavy periods (may be signs of abnormal clotting)
- lower abdominal pain or swelling, painful and/or heavy periods (may be signs of growth of fibroids in the uterus)
- yellowing of the eyes or skin (may be signs of jaundice)
- upper abdominal pain or swelling (may be signs of liver tumours)

**Check with your doctor as soon as possible if any of the following occur:**

- irregular vaginal bleeding
- intolerable breast tenderness
- breast enlargement or lumps
- pain or heaviness in the legs or chest
- severe headaches
- dizziness
- changes in vision
- persistent or severe skin irritation
- fluid retention or bloating persisting for more than 6 weeks

**Check with your doctor immediately if you experience:**

- narrowing of the throat
- sudden shortness of breath
- tightness of the chest or trouble breathing
- coughing blood
- rapid pulse or dizziness
- tender or painful inflammation of the veins
- pain or heaviness in the legs or chest
- any other unusual symptom

## **HOW TO USE OESCLIM®**

Your doctor will explain when to start using OESCLIM®. The OESCLIM® patches are applied twice weekly on the same days of each week. The system is changed every 3 or 4 days.

OESCLIM® is usually applied for 25 days out of 28 followed by 2 to 7 treatment-free days. Therefore 7 patches are required per cycle. To help you, we have included a timetable that marks the days of the week on which you should change your patch and the day you should remove the 7th patch (25th day of the cycle). Your next cycle starts with the next patch application.

If you still have your uterus, your doctor should prescribe another hormone drug (a progestogen) at the same time as the patch for at least the last 12 days of each treatment cycle with OESCLIM®.

Bleeding similar to menstrual bleeding may occur during the treatment-free period. This bleeding should be normal and slight.

Your doctor may prescribe the treatment using a different schedule that is better adapted to your condition. The system may be applied continuously with no treatment-free days.

It is important that you take your medication as your doctor has prescribed. Do not discontinue or change your therapy without consulting your doctor.

## **How OESCLIM® Works**

Estradiol is the main estrogen produced by your ovaries prior to the menopause, and is the same estrogen that is in OESCLIM®. When applied to the skin, the OESCLIM® patch continuously releases small, controlled quantities of estradiol, which passes through your skin and into your bloodstream. The amount of estrogen prescribed depends on your body's needs. Your doctor may adjust the amount you get by prescribing another (different) patch size.

By providing estradiol, OESCLIM® offers relief from menopausal symptoms.

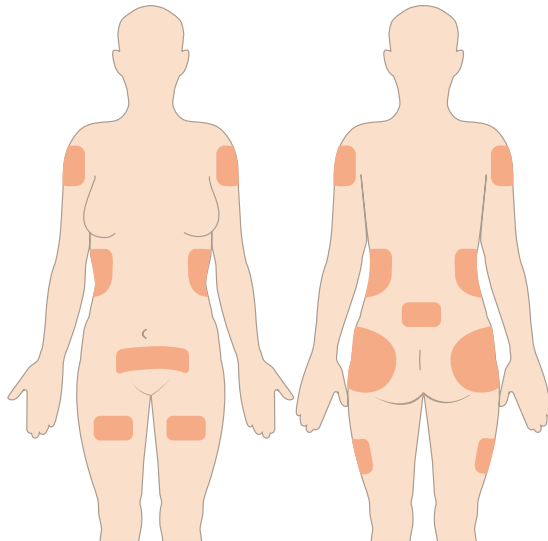
## How and Where to Apply OESCLIM®

The site of application should be changed each time the patch is applied. However, each time you apply the patch you should always apply it to the same area of your body (i.e., if the patch is applied to the buttocks, move the patch from the right side to the left side).

1. **Preparing the skin:** In order for the patch to stick, the skin should be clean, dry and free of creams, lotions or oils. If you wish, you may use body lotion after the patch has been properly applied to the skin. The skin should not be irritated or broken, since this may alter the amount of hormone you get. Contact with water (bath, pool or shower) will not affect the patch, although very hot water or steam may loosen it and therefore should be avoided.
2. **Where to Apply the OESCLIM® Patch:** The patch may be applied to the buttock, the torso (area under the arms at the elbow level, abdomen) or the upper part of the arm or thigh (see Fig. 1). Change the site of application each time you put a patch on. You can use the same spot more than once but not twice in a row.

**Do not apply OESCLIM® to your abdomen,** if a dose of OESCLIM® has been previously adjusted by your doctor with the patch applied to other sites of your body, as this might change the amount of hormone delivered.

**Fig. 1**



Avoid areas of the skin where clothing may rub the patch off or areas where the skin is very hairy or folded. Also avoid areas where the patch is likely to be exposed to the sun since this may affect how the patch works.

**Do not apply OESCLIM® to your breast,** since this may cause unwanted effects and discomfort.

3. **Opening the Pouch:** Each OESCLIM® patch is individually sealed in a protective pouch. Tear open this pouch and remove the patch. Do not use scissors, as you may accidentally cut and destroy the patch.
4. **Removing the Liner:** The patch is made up of an adhesive part containing the active substance and a transparent protective film. The protective liner must be removed.  
To separate the patch from the protective liner, lift a corner of the liner and peel it off the patch. Discard the protective liner. Avoid touching the adhesive. Press the sticky side on the skin and smooth down.  
Apply the patch immediately after opening the pouch and removing the liner.

5. **Applying the OESCLIM® Patch:** Apply the adhesive side to the spot you have chosen. Check that the OESCLIM® system is sticking correctly: press firmly in place for about 10 seconds with the palm of your hand over its entire surface area.
6. **When and How to Remove the Patch:** To remove OESCLIM®, simply lift up one edge and pull. The OESCLIM® patch should be changed twice weekly. Always change it on the same 2 days of the week. If you forget to change it at the scheduled time, there is no cause for alarm. Just change it as soon as possible and continue to follow your usual schedule.  
After you remove the patch fold it in half with the adhesive side inwards. **Throw it away out of the reach of children and pets.**

Apply a new OESCLIM® patch on a different spot of clean, dry skin.