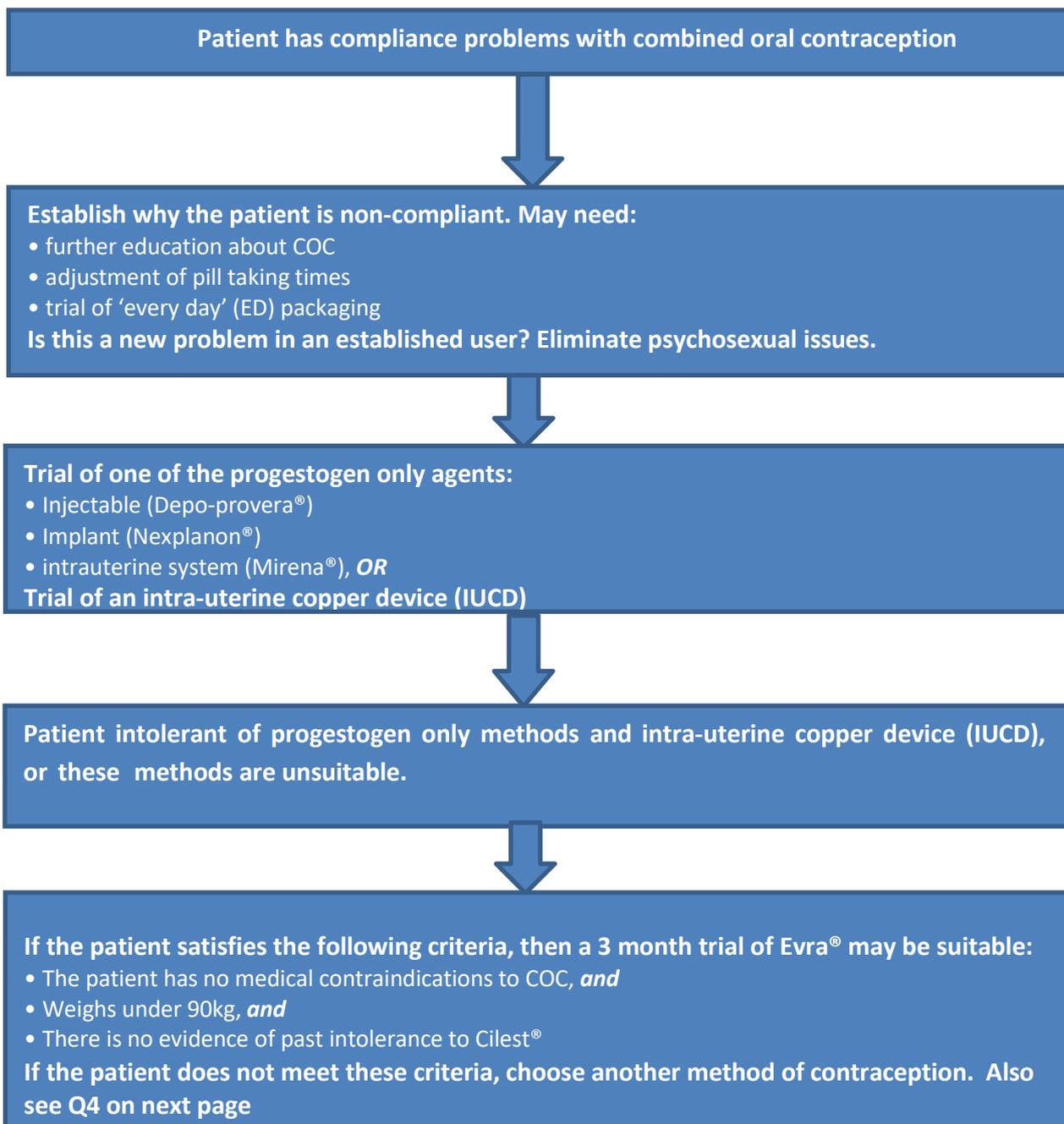


Evra® is currently the only licensed transdermal contraceptive patch available in the UK. It delivers 203micrograms norelgestromin (a progestogen) and 33.9micrograms of ethinyloestradiol (an oestrogen) over 24 hours for 7 days.



Information for the patient

To dispose of used patches, the disposal label from the outside of the sachet should be peeled open. The used patch should be placed within the open disposal label so that the sticky surface covers the shaded area on the sachet. The disposal label should then be closed sealing the used transdermal patch within. Used patches should not be flushed down the toilet.

The relative risk of VTE in comparison to other contraceptive options should be discussed with patients. (See section 10 of [FSRH Clinical Guideline: Combined Hormonal Contraception](#))

Q: What is Evra®?

A transdermal combined contraceptive patch, containing norelgestromin and ethinyloestradiol. One patch is applied and worn for 1 week to suppress ovulation. The patch is replaced on a weekly basis for two further weeks (day 8 and day 15). The fourth week (starting on day 22) is patch-free to allow a withdrawal bleed. A new patch is then applied after seven patch-free days.

Safety and efficacy has been established in women aged 18 to 45 years of age. Efficacy may be decreased in women weighing $\geq 90\text{kg}$.

Q: A bit like Cilest® on the skin then?

The patch appears to work as well at preventing pregnancy as the combined pill, has a similar side effect profile and the same mode of action. However, if a combined oral contraceptive is an absolute contraindication for the patient then the patch will be too.

Q: So how is Evra® different to the COC?

Evra's contraceptive effect will not be compromised if a woman suffers from vomiting or diarrhoea. In one study, self-reported "perfect" compliance was significantly better with the patch than with the combined pill. However, this did not translate into improved efficacy. **Evra® costs £19.51 per 3 months (Drug Tariff Nov 2020) compared with combined oral contraceptives, which cost between £1.99 and £14.70.**

Q: Who would be a good candidate for Evra®?

In BSW, use of Evra® is supported in the following 4 groups of women:

- Women planning to travel abroad who do not want their contraception compromised by gastrointestinal upset and have a desire to avoid their menstrual period by avoiding the patch free week. (Care if the woman intends to trek in high altitudes).
- Those with lactose intolerance who want a combined hormonal method rather than a LARC. All current oral contraception has lactose as an excipient.
- A woman who for whatever reason has compliance problems with oral combined contraceptives and who is intolerant of or unsuitable for other methods, which are 'compliance free'. The woman will still need to be able to remember to change her patch each week.
- Shift workers.

Q: Is Evra® affected by enzyme inducing agents?

Yes. During any short term therapy with an enzyme inducing agent and for 28 days after this ends, additional contraception is advised plus the elimination of any patch free interval during this time. Anyone on long term therapy with enzyme inducers should use another method (IUS, IUD or DMPA).

Q: We double the dose of pills for women on enzyme inducing agents, so can we use two patches instead?

No, not advised by FSRH, or in the summary of product characteristics (see reference below). Only one patch should be worn at any one time. Another contraceptive option may be more suitable in these circumstances.

Q: How and where is the patch applied?

- Apply the patch to clean, dry, hairless, intact healthy skin on the buttock, abdomen, upper outer arm or upper torso, in a place where it will not be rubbed by tight clothing.
- Evra® should not be placed on the breasts or on skin that is red, irritated or cut. Each consecutive transdermal patch should be applied to a different place on the skin to help avoid potential irritation, although they may be kept within the same anatomic site.
- The transdermal patch should be pressed down firmly until the edges stick well.

Patches normally stick well to the skin with normal daily activity. However, patients should be counselled to take care with any topical product (e.g. make-up, creams, lotions, powders) as these may affect the stickiness of the patch if applied to the area where the patch is placed or where it will be applied shortly. The contraceptive is in the glue of the patch, so a dry patch that has fallen off should not be reused.

Reference: Evra transdermal patch Summary of Product Characteristics: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6794>