

Patient information

Interaction between anaesthetic drugs and hormonal contraception

This information applies to you if you are relying on a hormonal method of contraception and presenting for surgery under general anaesthesia, as you may be given an anaesthetic drug called sugammadex.

What is Sugammadex?

During a general anaesthetic you are given medicines called muscle relaxants to make your muscles relax, making it easier for the surgeon to operate. These medicines make your breathing muscles relax and you will need these muscles to work properly after your operation so that you can breathe on your own again. Sugammadex is given at the end of the operation to reverse the effect of these muscle relaxant drugs and help you breathe normally as you wake up from your anaesthetic.

Sugammadex can interact with any hormonal contraceptive method, making it less effective. Being given sugammadex has about the same effect as missing one dose of oral contraceptive pill.

Hormonal contraception

- Combined oral contraceptive pills
- Progestogen-only pills ('mini' pills)
- Contraceptive injections (eg Depo Provera)
- Progestogen-only implants (eg Implanon, Nexplanon)
- Contraceptive patches (adhesive patch worn on skin, eg Evra)
- Vaginal rings (eg NuvaRing)

What to do if you have been given Sugammadex

If the anaesthetic team have informed you that you have been given sugammadex during the anaesthetic, an alert or sticker will be attached to your notes.

If you are taking the contraceptive pill (either the combined pill or mini pill) on the same day sugammadex is given to you, **please follow the instructions for a missed dose in the pill's package leaflet.**

If you are using other hormonal contraceptives, you should use an additional non-hormonal contraceptive as a backup method for the next 7 days as explained below. Do not stop your hormonal contraception during this time.

- male condom
- female condom
- female diaphragm
- female cervical cap
- abstinence from sexual activity

If you are using hormones for the treatment of menstrual problems or as hormone replacement therapy at the menopause, but are not relying on this for contraception, you need not take any action. You might notice some unscheduled vaginal bleeding within the next few days or weeks.

Contact details

Anaesthesia Department: 01284 712819

Or can ring the switchboard on 01284 713000 and ask for extension 2819.

You can ring the Anaesthesia Department and speak to any one of the anaesthetic secretaries and your queries will be addressed by the department.

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<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>

