Erythromycin for the premature rupture of membranes

What is it used for?
After premature rupture of membranes, there is a small chance of bacteria travelling from the vagina into the uterus causing infection in either you or your baby. Erythromycin is used to lower the risk of infections both for yourself and baby.

How the medicine works
Erythromycin is an antibiotic used to treat or prevent infection. It stops bacteria multiplying by disrupting their growth.

How and when you should take your medicine
Erythromycin should be taken FOUR times a day at regular intervals throughout waking hours for a total of 10 days. It is not necessary to wake up specifically to take them during the night. The capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water with or after meals. It is important that you complete your course of antibiotics. Please continue to take these even if you feel well.

Possible side effects
You may experience the following side-effects when you start taking erythromycin:
1. Diarrhoea: If you experience diarrhoea ensure that you drink plenty of water to replace the lost fluids and speak to your doctor if diarrhoea is severe.
2. Stomach pains: To reduce stomach pains, take your doses after a meal or snack
3. Vomiting: When you start taking erythromycin you may get stomach pains and feel sick or be sick. To reduce nausea, eat little and often and stick to simple foods.
Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if side effects become troublesome or if you notice any unusual side effects.

Safety in pregnancy
Erythromycin is not known to be harmful in pregnancy and is the antibiotic of choice for preventing infections in premature rupture of membranes.
Information about your medicines during pregnancy.

Many women need to take medicines whilst they are pregnant. In some circumstances, not using a medicine may be more harmful to you and your baby than using it.

Some medicines have been found not to cause harm during pregnancy, however others have caused harm in some cases, but this is unpredictable.

The effect of the medicine on the baby also depends on the stage of pregnancy that you have reached when you take it. Some medicines are considered to be safe in one stage but not in another.

Before taking any medicine including over the counter and herbal remedies always discuss your specific circumstances with your doctor or pharmacist to weigh up the overall risks and benefits.

Please return any unused medicines that are no longer needed to a pharmacy for safe disposal.

If you feel that any problems you are having are possibly caused by your medicines, inform your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible.

Remember to contact your doctor before your prescription has run out to obtain further supplies.

If you have any questions about your medicines please do not hesitate to contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Further information

A leaflet which explains your medicine can be found within most medicine packets. As drug companies do not test medicines on pregnant women you may find conflicting advice between the package insert and this leaflet. If you have any concerns please discuss with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. We also recommend the following websites for further information on your medicines: www.medicines.org.uk/guides and www.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the Service Equality Manager on 0116 258 8295