

# GYNAECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS UPDATE

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## Co-cyprindiol [Dianette] *How long can it be used for?*

- \* Co-cyprindiol and Dianette® (Schering Health) contain 35 micrograms ethinyl oestradiol with 2 mg cyproterone acetate (a progestogen with anti-androgenic properties).
- \* Dianette® is not licensed as a contraceptive but for treatment of acne or hirsutism.
- \* Risk of venous thromboembolism (VTE):
  - \* A case-control study (1) used data from the General Practice Research Database and, after adjustment for body mass index (BMI), smoking and androgenic disorders, showed a **four-fold increase** in the risk of VTE with Dianette® compared with a COC containing levonorgestrel (OR 3.9, 95% CI 1.1-13.4). Duration of use did not affect this risk.
  - \* A combined nested cohort analysis and case-control study (2) support this level of risk but no randomised trials have been performed thus confounding and bias cannot be excluded.
- \* The Committee on the Safety of Medicines (CSM) (3,4) advises:
  - \* Dianette is not indicated solely as a contraceptive; it is a treatment option for women with severe acne, which has not responded to oral antibiotics, or for moderately severe hirsutism
  - \* It is contra-indicated in those with a personal or close family history of venous thromboembolism.
  - \* **it should be withdrawn 3-4 months after the treated condition has resolved (Further management may need a specialized gynaecological referral)**

References:

1. Vasilakis-Scaramozza C, Jick H. *Lancet* 2001;358:1427-9.
2. Seaman HE, Vries CS, Farmer RD. *Hum Reprod* 2003;18:522-6.
3. CSM. Cyproterone acetate (Dianette): Risk of venous thromboembolism (VTE). *Curr Probl Pharmacovigilance* 2002;28:9-10.
4. RCOG guidelines (40): Venous thromboembolism and Hormonal contraception.