

- 10 Hamoda H, Ashok PW, Flett GMM, Templeton A. Home self-administration of misoprostol for medical abortion up to 56 days' gestation. *J Fam Plann Reprod Health Care* 2005; **31**: 189–192.
- 11 Teal SB, Dempsey-Fanning A, Westhoff C. Predictors of acceptability of medication abortion. *Contraception* 2007; **75**: 224–229.
- 12 Ho PC. Women's perceptions on medical abortion. *Contraception* 2006; **74**: 11–15.
- 13 Winikoff B, Ellertson C, Elul B, Sivin I. Acceptability and feasibility of early pregnancy termination by mifepristone-misoprostol. Results of a large multicenter trial in the United States. Mifepristone Clinical Trials Group. *Arch Fam Med* 1998; **7**: 360–366.
- 14 Department of Health. *Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2008* (Statistical Bulletin 2009/1). London, UK: Department of Health, 2009.
- 15 Department of Health. *Evaluation of Early Medical Abortion (EMA) Pilot Sites: Final Report*. London, UK: Department of Health, 2008.

VIEW FROM PRIMARY CARE

How not to make a pig's ear of swine flu immunisation

Polly Clinic

The swine flu pandemic may have some unforeseen consequences. Due to the major vaccination programme and also the possible burden of increased consultations on GP surgeries, health professionals in other branches of medicine have been approached to help.

It is an undeniable truth that patients always attend with more than one problem when they see their GP. To meet patient needs, here are some helpful hints and tips for specialist family planning health professionals, using their skill and experience in their field, while at the same time focusing on the green agenda of reduce, reuse and recycle.

Paronychia may be easily treated using the needle of the Depo-Provera[®] syringe. The syringe can then be recycled for ear syringing.

Physiotherapy referrals can be avoided by prescribing diaphragms – the spring makes an excellent hand exercise device, and chasing a diaphragm around the room when it springs out of the hand gives useful exercise for the whole body. If it should also be needed for its original purpose, the position for insertion gives added benefits for flexibility of the hips. Out-of-date contraceptive pill packets can be recycled by advising patients with finger stiffness to pop out the pills one at a time, then when they jump out and fall on the floor under the chest of drawers, kneel down, bend almost prone and pick them up using the thumb and each other finger in turn.

Finger injuries and sprains can be splinted with implants, and condoms can be helpful as a substitute for finger cots. Remember to advise the use of condoms for Mr Blue who now has a twinkle in his eye since meeting the widow Mrs Puffer in the Breathe Easy Class – and she will need some lubricants as well.

Vigorous massaging of lubricants will also benefit patients with arthritis – patients may present with early morning stiffness of various types.

The convenient strings on intrauterine devices (IUDs)

can be used for ligation of skin tags – advise the patient that the weight of the coil hanging down will encourage separation as well as providing an interesting topic of conversation down the pub.

For stress-related problems, simply prescribe Persona[™] and advise intercourse on all green days. This method can equally be used for anger management, exercise referrals, irritable bowel syndrome, tension headaches, and so on. Using Persona to identify premenstrual days can benefit husbands and partners so that they can be out of the house at the correct time of the month.

Used Evra[®] patches can be used as waterproof dressings, although you may need to add a little extra adhesion round the edges.

If you have any old caps or diaphragms in your room, these can be reused as nipple shields to prevent jogger's nipple, or as breast shields after delivery for those pregnant patients who will be breastfeeding later.

The contraceptive sponge has a new lease of life for patients with hyperhidrosis, and provides extra protection for urinary incontinence when used together with a diaphragm.

Femidoms – we cannot think of any uses for these. Answers on a postcard please.

Patients requesting referral for breast augmentation can take combined oral contraceptives as a trial to see how they like their new body shape.

Acne can be treated using Dianette[®] (and yes, you can prescribe this in GP surgeries!).

A speculum can be used to keep the mouth open while examining the throat – this is especially useful in small children. Like dentists, we are used to wearing gloves, so wear them all the time for *any* contact with patients to avoid infecting yourself, using hand washing and/or alcohol gels between each patient to avoid cross-infection. Remember – your role is health prevention ... or should that be illness prevention?

A final piece of advice – leave a copy of *The Joy of Sex* in the waiting room to supplement the usual tatty magazines and health promotion leaflets. Not only will patients be happy to wait half an hour to see you, they may decide they don't need to see you after all.

J Fam Plann Reprod Health Care 2010; **36**(1): 25

Multitasker Surgery, Speedington, UK
Polly Clinic, DFRH, General Practitioner

FACULTY AWARDS

The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare has available a number of annual awards for which applications are invited from Faculty members/non-members. Details of the individual awards, and application forms and/or guidelines on how to apply and any eligibility criteria, may be found on the Faculty website at www.fsrh.org (Scholarship & Awards).