

Visanne (Dienogest) and Ryeqo Information

What is endometriosis and how many people does it affect in New Zealand?

Endometriosis is a chronic condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus, causing inflammation, pain, fatigue and fertility problems. It affects an estimated 1 in 10 girls, women and those assigned female at birth, around 120,000 people in New Zealand.

How do hormonal treatments for endometriosis work?

Endometriosis is driven by the hormone oestrogen. Hormonal treatments work by suppressing or regulating oestrogen, which can reduce inflammation, help control pain and delay or prevent recurrence following surgery. These therapies are internationally recognised as treatment to be used alongside surgery and multidisciplinary care.

Are hormonal treatments right for everyone with endometriosis?

No. Hormonal treatments help many, but not all people. Some experience side effects such as mood changes, bleeding changes, headaches or migraines, and others do not get enough symptom relief. Fertility considerations, age, medical history and personal response to hormones all matter.

How does Visanne (dienogest) work?

Visanne contains dienogest, a progestogen that reduces oestrogen activity. This creates an environment that can shrink endometrial tissue and reducing symptoms such as inflammation and pain. It is taken as a daily oral tablet and is designed for long-term medical management of endometriosis.

Visanne is well tolerated by many people, with long-term studies showing that around 73% were still taking it after three years.

How does Ryeqo work?

Ryeqo is a combination therapy that includes:

- Relugolix, which blocks the body's production of oestrogen, and
- "Add-back" hormones (estradiol and norethisterone acetate), which help protect bone health and reduce side effects

Ryeqo is taken as one tablet a day, with use recommended to 24 months. It is designed for people with moderate to severe endometriosis pain who have already tried other medical or surgical treatments.

Are these medicines already used overseas?

Yes. Both Visanne and Ryeqo are widely used and funded overseas. Visanne is funded in the UK, Australia, Germany, Japan and many other countries.

Ryeqo is registered and used in the UK, Australia and Europe, and has been available in New Zealand since July 2025 but remains unfunded.

Is Endometriosis New Zealand promoting these medicines?

No. Endometriosis New Zealand is not endorsing any one treatment. We advocate for fair access to the full range of evidence-based treatment options, so clinicians and patients can make the best decision for each individual.

Without Pharmac funding, these medicines can cost hundreds of dollars every few months, putting them out of reach for many.