

Considerations

- The vaginal muscles will keep the ring securely in place. If the ring does slip out, rinse in cool or lukewarm water (not hot) and reinsert it promptly.
- If the ring is lost, insert a new one and remove it on the same day that you would have taken out the lost one.
- If the ring has been out for more than 3 hours, you may not be adequately protected from pregnancy. Use an extra method of birth control until the ring has been in place for 7 days in a row.
- The ring cannot get lost inside of you.
- Usually your partner will not feel the ring during intercourse.
- Store your extra rings at room temperature and avoid direct sunlight.
- If you forget to remove the ring after 3 weeks, remove it and insert a new ring after your week off. If left longer than 4 weeks you will not be protected from pregnancy. Use an extra method of birth control until a new ring has been in place for 7 days in a row.
- Do not use the diaphragm as a backup method of birth control, as the ring may interfere with the correct placement of the diaphragm.
- Do not smoke cigarettes while using hormonal forms of birth control.

Notes:



Contraceptive Ring

What
You
Need
to
Know



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What is it?

It is the responsibility of any woman who considers using hormonal contraceptive therapy to understand the benefits and risks. Read the package insert that comes with your prescription.

The contraceptive ring is a flexible round ring about 2 inches in diameter which is inserted into the vagina. It is a system that delivers estrogen and progesterone (the same hormones that are used in oral contraceptives) into the body at a steady rate over 3 weeks. These hormones cause ovulation and the natural menstrual cycle to cease, resulting in prevention of pregnancy.

Hormonal contraceptive therapy does not protect against sexually transmitted infection, including HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. To help protect against contracting a sexually transmitted infection, use a condom along with your ring.



Effectiveness

When used according to label instructions the contraceptive ring is highly effective in preventing pregnancy. The chance of becoming pregnant is less than 1-2% (1-2 pregnancies per 100 women per year of perfect use). Consistently correct use can result in better pregnancy prevention rates. The contraceptive ring is not indicated for emergency contraception.

Getting the Ring

If you are starting hormonal contraception for the first time or you've changed your prescription, you will be asked to return in your third cycle for a blood pressure and weight check with a nurse. You do not need to make an appointment for this. If you are not experiencing any problems, the nurse will give you a prescription for enough cycles to last until your next annual exam. A yearly exam with your clinician is recommended for continued use of hormonal contraception.

How to Start the Ring

When

If you have not used a hormonal contraceptive method in the past month: Count the first day of your period as Day 1. Insert your first ring between day 1 and day 5 of your cycle. Insert the ring even if you have not finished bleeding. Do not insert the ring later than day 5. Use an additional method of birth control for the first 7 days after inserting the ring.

If you are switching from another hormonal method: Insert the ring on the day you would have started a new pack of pills, patch, or injection. An extra method of birth control is not needed.

Where & How

After removing the ring from its foil pouch, hold it between your thumb and index finger and press the sides together. Gently push the folded ring into your vagina. The exact position is not important for it to work. Once inserted, most women do not feel the ring. If you feel discomfort, use your finger to gently push it farther into your vagina.

Removal

Once inserted, keep the ring in for 3 weeks in a row. Remove the ring 3 weeks after insertion on the

same day of the week as it was inserted, at about the same time of day.

Hook your index finger around the rim of the ring and gently pull it out. Dispose of the ring in a waste receptacle out of the reach of children and pets. Do not put in the toilet.

When to Insert a New Ring

Exactly 1 week after you remove the ring, insert a new one. Your period will usually start 2-3 days after you remove the ring. Even if you have not stopped bleeding, you must insert a new ring one week after the last one was removed.

Remember—it's 3 weeks in, 1 week out. It is a good idea to record on a calendar as a reminder.



Side Effects

Mild side effects include:

- vaginal irritation or discharge
- headache
- weight changes
- nausea
- breast tenderness
- emotional lability