



How does it work?

Just like in birth control pills, there are two hormones (estrogen and progestin) in the patch. These hormones stop your ovaries from releasing eggs and make your cervical mucus thicker. This stops the sperm from getting to the eggs. The patch does not protect against STDs.

How effective is the patch?

When the patch is used perfectly, only 1 in 100 women will get pregnant in 1 year. However, since no one is perfect, there is a 9% risk of getting pregnant in a year while using the patch.

What may be done before I start using the birth control patch?

Your doctor will ask you about diseases you have had in the past, as well as check your blood pressure. A pelvic exam is not needed unless you are having problems.

Your doctor will ask you about medicines you use and if you smoke. Smoking increases your chance of having a stroke, heart attack or blood clot. If you smoke and 35 years or older, you should not use the patch.

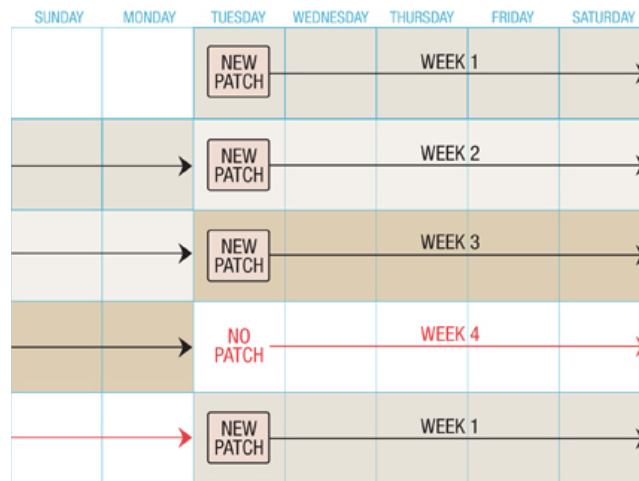
Do not use this medicine if you have breast or uterine cancer, liver disease, or certain types of headache (migraines with aura). You should not use the estrogen-containing pill, patch or the ring if you have ever had a blood clot, heart attack, or stroke.

How do I start my birth control patch?

Place your first patch on the first day of your period, or on the first Sunday after your period begins. If you place your first patch after your period, you may need a backup method for one week. You can also ask your provider about a "Quick Start" method so you can start right away. The patch can be started 4-6 weeks after having a baby and while breastfeeding.

How do I use the patch?

Most women find that the patch is easy to use. You'll stick one new patch on the skin of your stomach, buttocks, upper outer arm, or back once a week for three weeks in a row. You won't put on a patch for the fourth week. So, if you start on a Tuesday, your month will look like this:



Tips for using your patch:

Store your unused, sealed patches at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. Consider the first day you apply the patch as "patch change day." So if you first apply the patch on a Tuesday, you will always apply, change, or remove it on a Tuesday. Gently tear the package along the top and side edges. Peel the foil pouch apart and open it flat. Then peel the patch and plastic layer off the foil liner. Next, peel half of the clear plastic away from the patch itself — do not touch the sticky part. Apply the sticky half of the patch to a clean and dry area of skin on your buttocks, stomach, upper outer arm, or back. Never put it on your breasts. Do not use body lotion, oil, powder, or makeup on skin where you are going to put the patch. They could keep the patch from sticking. Remove the other half of the plastic and press the full patch to the skin with your palm for 10 seconds.

What are the advantages of using the patch?

Birth control patches may help decrease bleeding and pain during your period. They also help prevent cancer of the uterus, ovaries and colon. They can also prevent ovarian cysts.

What are the disadvantages of using the patch?

You must remember to change the patch every week, which can be inconvenient or difficult for some people. Most women do not have any side effects. You may have mood changes, bleeding between periods, or breast pain. Birth control patches put you at a small increased risk for blood clot and stroke, especially if you smoke and are older than 34. However, your risk of a blood clot or stroke is much higher during pregnancy than when you are using the patch. If you weigh more than 198 lbs, the patch may not work as well for you.

If you are found to be pregnant when you are using the patch, they will not cause miscarriage or birth defects.

What medications interact with birth control patches?

Antibiotics – rifampin or rifabutin (common antibiotics do NOT interfere)
 Some anti-seizure medications, but not all of them
 Certain HIV medications, but not all of them

How much does the patch cost?

Depending on your insurance, the patch may cost \$15-70 per month. Talk to your insurance company to get an exact cost.

You can find more information here:

www.bedsider.org

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-topics/birth-control/birth-control-patch-ortho-evra-4240.htm>
