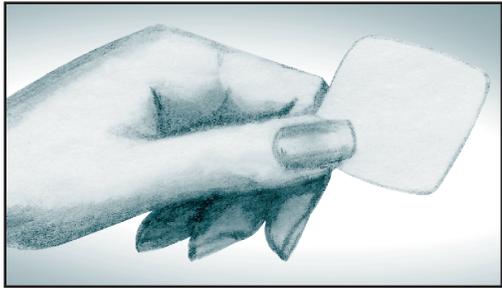


All about the Contraceptive Patch

The Contraceptive Patch is a small patch that you put on your skin once a week to keep from getting pregnant.

Each Patch lasts for 7 days. The woman takes the old Patch off and puts a new Patch on a different part of her body. She does this for 3 weeks in a row. After 7 days without a Patch, she starts a new box of Patches.



This is what the patch looks like.

How does the Patch work?

The Patch has two kinds of hormones (estrogen and progesterin) like the ones made in a woman's body. These hormones are taken in through the skin and go into the blood stream. They keep the woman's eggs from leaving her ovaries.

How well does it work?

About 9 women out of 100 who use the Patch for a year get pregnant.

The Patch may not work as well for women who weigh more than 200 pounds. Ask your Family PACT provider for advice.

What do women like about using it?

- It does not interrupt having sex.
- It is easy to use.
- The Patch stays on in the shower, bath, with exercise, even with swimming.
- It is easy to check if it is there.
- There is nothing to remember on a daily basis.
- It can help a woman know when she is going to have her periods.

What do some women dislike?

- You must remember to change the Patch every week.
- It may leave stickiness on the skin that you can take off with baby oil.
- It can be seen on your skin.
- There are side effects such as spotting between periods.



The patch can be worn on the arm, back, shoulder, hips or abdomen.

How do I get the Patch?

You must go to a health care provider. You should tell your provider about:

- Any health problems you have.
- Any medicine you are taking.

Your Family PACT provider can help you decide if the Patch is right for you.

How do I use the Patch?

Start using your Patch the day your health care provider suggests. Your provider may tell you to put on the first patch the same day of your visit.

Put each Patch on a different part of your body.

- You can put it on your hips, upper arms, back, or shoulders.
- Do not use it on your breasts or underarms.

For just the first 7 days, use another method, like condoms, every time you have sex.

The Patch works best if the level of hormones stays the same in your body. Change your Patch the same day each week. Ask your Family PACT provider to show you how to put the Patch on.

Week 1:

- Be sure your skin is clean and dry.
- Put the Patch on with care.
- Press down on the Patch for 10 seconds.
- Make sure the edges of the Patch are sticking firmly.
- Keep the Patch on for 7 days.

Week 2 and Week 3:

- After 7 days, take the Patch off. Fold it in half and throw it in a trash can away from children and pets.
- Put a new Patch on a different part of your body.
- Change it on the same day of the week each week.

Week 4:

- Take the Patch off. Do not put a new Patch on.
- Wait 7 days. You will get your period during this week.
- Then start again with Week 1.

What about the side effects?

Some side effects of the Patch are:

- Skin rash or redness where the Patch is placed.
- Nausea or breast tenderness.
- Changes in your period, or spotting and bleeding between periods.
- Headaches.

If any of these side effects bother you, talk to your Family PACT provider.

- Rare but serious complications are blood clots in the legs or lung.

The Patch may not be safe for some women.

Talk to your Family PACT provider about any health problems you may have. For example, if you:

- Are over 35 years old and smoke.
- Have had blood clots in your legs or lungs.
- Have had a heart attack or stroke.
- Have high blood pressure or diabetes.
- Have had breast cancer.

Ask if the Patch is safe for you to use.

Watch for these warning signs.

With the Patch, you may get a higher dose of estrogen than you would with the pill. Tell your Family PACT provider right away if you have:

- Sudden headaches.
- Eye problems (blurry vision).
- Sharp, sudden pain in the leg, chest, or abdomen.

The Contraceptive Patch does not protect you from HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) and other infections people get from having sex.

Use condoms (for men or women) along with the Patch to protect yourself from these infections.