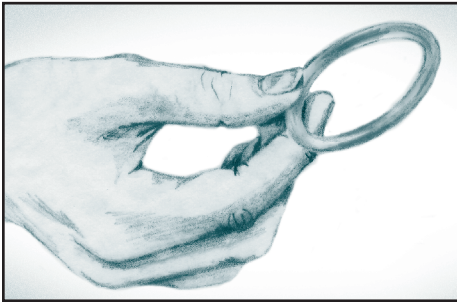


All about the Contraceptive Vaginal Ring

The Vaginal Ring is a small soft ring the woman puts in her vagina monthly to keep from getting pregnant.

Once the woman puts a new Ring into her vagina, the hormones are taken into her body through the skin of her vagina. Three weeks later, she takes it out and throws it away. After 7 days without a Ring, she puts in a new one.



This is what the ring looks like.

How well does it work?

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

What do women like about using the Ring?

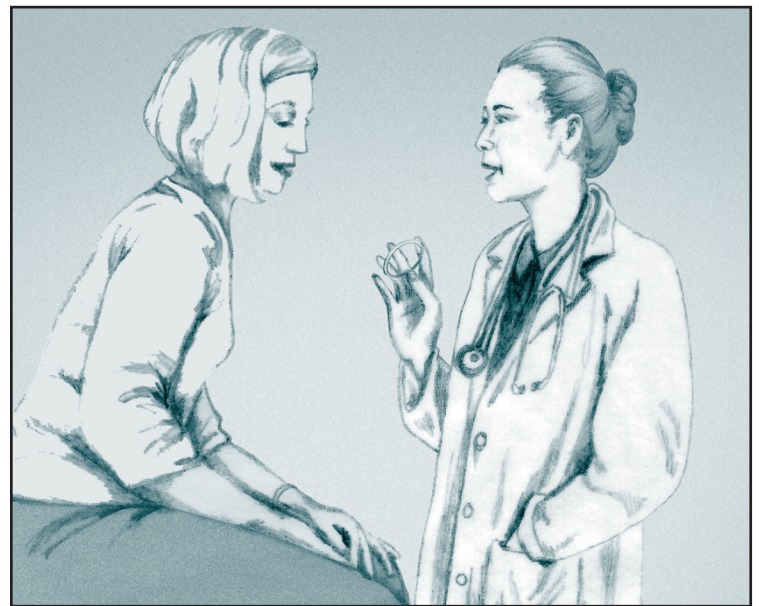
- It does not interrupt having sex.
- It is easy to use. A woman puts it in herself.
- It is easy to check to make sure it is in place.
- It can help a woman know when she is going to have her period.

What do some women dislike about it?

- Some women have a vaginal discharge or some discomfort.
- Some women may not feel comfortable putting the Ring in the vagina.
- Side effects such as spotting between periods.

How does the Ring work?

The Ring is made of soft and flexible plastic. It has two kinds of hormones in it like the ones made in a woman's body (estrogen and progesterin). These hormones keep the woman's eggs from leaving her ovaries.



Your provider will show you how to use the ring.

How do I get the Ring?

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

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

How do I use the Ring?

Start using your ring on the day your provider says. Your provider may tell you to insert the first ring on the same day of your visit.

The Ring is easy to put in your vagina. Here's how:

- Wash and dry your hands before taking the Ring out of the pouch.
- To put the Ring in your vagina, find a position that is comfortable: standing with one leg up, squatting, or lying down.
- Squeeze the Ring together between your thumb and fingers.
- Slip it into the opening of your vagina.
- Slide it farther back until it is comfortable. The muscles of your vagina will hold it in place.

The Ring can be any place in your vagina. It will still work.

Leave the Ring in your vagina for 3 weeks:

- Do not take it out when you have sex.
- You or your partner should not feel it.

After 3 weeks, take the Ring out:

- Hook your finger in the Ring, gently pull it out.
- Throw it in a trashcan away from children or pets.
- Wait 7 days. You will get your period during this time.

After 7 days, put a new Ring in your vagina. Always put the Ring in on the same day of the week.

What if it falls out?

If the Ring falls out, wash it and just put it back in right away. It's more likely to fall out in the first month when you are getting used to using it.

What about the side effects?

The hormones in the Ring may cause some side effects:

- Headaches
 - Nausea or breast tenderness
 - Spotting and bleeding between periods
- If any of these side effects bother you, talk to your Family PACT provider.
- Rare but serious side effects are blood clots in legs or lungs, or toxic shock syndrome.

The Ring may not be safe for some women to use.

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 a stroke.
- Have high blood pressure or diabetes.
- Have ever had breast cancer.

Ask your provider if the Ring would be a good method for you to use.

Watch for these warning signs.

Call 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 RING 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 Ring to protect yourself from these infections.