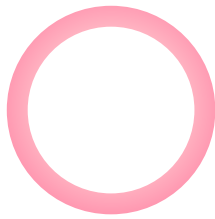




ALL ABOUT THE BIRTH CONTROL VAGINAL RING

What is the birth control vaginal ring?

The birth control vaginal ring is a small soft ring made of flexible plastic a person puts in their vagina to keep from getting pregnant. The ring has two kinds of hormones, estrogen and progestin, like the ones made in a person's body.



How does the birth control vaginal ring work?

A person puts a new ring into the vagina. The hormones are taken into the body through the skin of the vagina. These hormones keep the eggs from leaving the ovaries. The progestin thickens the mucus on the cervix. This thicker cervical mucus blocks sperm so they can't swim to an egg and cause a pregnancy.



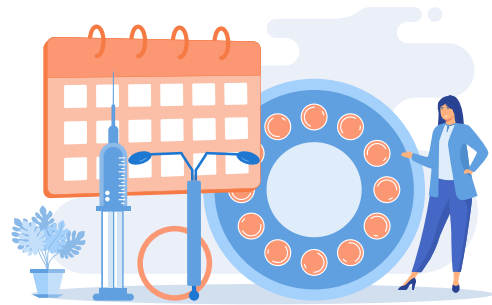
There are two types of vaginal rings:

- » **NuvaRing®** - It is a monthly ring. You put it in for 3 weeks, take it out, and put a new one in 7 days later. It needs to be replaced every 28 days.
- » **Annovera®** - It is a yearly ring. You put it in the vagina for 3 weeks, take it out for 7 days, and then put it back in. It lasts for a full year (13 cycles).

93%
EFFECTIVE

How well does the birth control vaginal ring work?

The ring is very good at preventing pregnancy. Only about 7 in 100 sexually active women who use the vaginal ring get pregnant in the first year with typical use.



How can I get the birth control vaginal ring?

A Family PACT provider can help. Tell your provider about:

- » Any health problems you may have.
- » Any medicines you may be taking.

Your provider can help you decide if the ring is right for you.





What do people like about the birth control vaginal ring?

- » It does not interrupt or interfere with sexual intercourse.
- » It is easy to use. A person can put it in the vagina without outside help.
- » It is easy to check to make sure it is in place.
- » There is nothing to remember on a daily basis.
- » It can help a person predict when a period will start.
- » It can lessen cramps and heavy bleeding that some people have during their periods.



What do people dislike about the birth control vaginal ring?

- » Some people have a vaginal discharge or experience some discomfort.
- » Some people may not feel comfortable putting their fingers in the vagina to put in the ring and pull it out.
- » There are side effects such as spotting between periods.
- » It must be prescribed by a health care provider.



How do I use the birth control vaginal ring?

Your Family PACT provider will let you know the date you can start using the ring. Your provider may tell you to insert the ring on the same day as your visit.

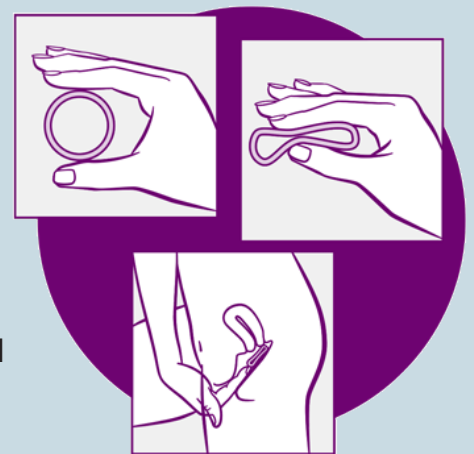
NuvaRing®

How to insert the ring:

- » Wash and dry your hands before taking the ring out of the pouch.
- » To put the ring in your vagina, find a comfortable position: standing with one leg up, squatting, or lying down.
- » Squeeze the ring together between your thumb and pointer finger and push it into your vagina.
- » Slide it back until it is comfortable. It's like inserting a tampon. You should not be able to feel it after inserting it. If you can feel it, then reposition it. The muscles of your vagina will hold it in place.
- » Leave the ring in your vagina for 3 weeks.

How to remove the ring:

- » After 3 weeks, when it's time to take the ring out, wash your hands, hook your finger around the side, and pull it out.
- » Wrap the used ring up and throw it in the trash, away from children or pets. Do not flush it down the toilet.
- » Wait 7 days. You will get your period. After 7 ring-free days, insert a new ring.
- » Set an alarm on your calendar or phone to remind you to when to replace your ring.



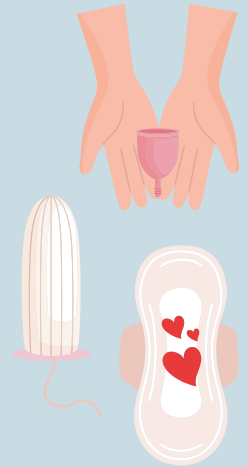
Annovera®

How to insert the ring:

- » Wash and dry your hands before taking the ring out of the pouch.
- » To put the ring in your vagina, find a comfortable position: standing with one leg up, squatting, or lying down.
- » Squeeze the ring together between your thumb and pointer finger and push it into your vagina.
- » Slide it back until it is comfortable. It's like inserting a tampon. You should not be able to feel it after inserting it. If you can feel it, then reposition it. The muscles of your vagina will hold it in place.
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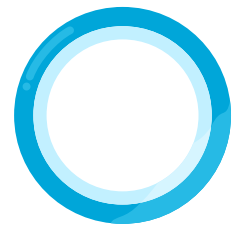
How to remove the ring:

- » After 3 weeks, when it's time to take the ring out, wash your hands, hook your finger around the side, and pull it out.
- » Wash it with mild soap and water. Pat it dry with a clean cloth or paper towel, and store it in its case.
- » Don't store the ring in the refrigerator.
- » After 7 ring-free days, gently wash the ring and put it back in the vagina.
- » Always put the ring in on the same day of the week.
- » You can safely use tampons, menstrual cups, and pads with the ring. Just be careful to not pull the ring out when you remove a tampon or menstrual cup.
- » Set an alarm on your calendar or phone to remind you to when to replace your ring.



Things to keep in mind:

- » The ring can be any place in your vagina. It will still work.
- » The ring can't get lost in your vagina or be in too deep.
- » You can leave the ring in during sex or any other kind of physical activity.
- » If you remove it for any reason, put it back in as soon as possible. If it's outside the vagina for more than 2 hours (Annovera®) or 3 hours (NuvaRing®), you may not be protected from pregnancy.
- » The ring works best if the level of hormones stays the same in your body. Depending on where you are in your menstrual cycle when you first start the ring, it may not start working right away. If you have sex during this period, use a back-up method like condoms.
 - » If you start the ring within the first 5 days since your period started, no back-up method (like condoms) is needed.
 - » If you start the ring later than 5 days after your period started, you either need to abstain from sexual intercourse or use a back-up method (like condoms) for the next 7 days.





Do I have to take the birth control vaginal ring out during sex?

No. It's best to leave the ring in your vagina as much as possible. The ring is made to be worn all the time, including during sex. If it bothers you or your partner, try moving the ring around until it feels comfortable.

If you do take the ring out during sex, rinse it in lukewarm (not hot) water and put it back in as soon as you can.

Don't use a lubricant that has oil or silicone in it while the ring is in your vagina. Water-based lubricants are safe to use. Don't use the birth control vaginal gel Phexxi with the birth control vaginal ring.

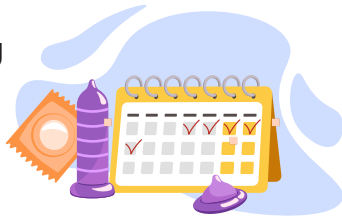


What do I do if I forget to change my birth control vaginal ring or if it falls out?

It shouldn't happen often, but sometimes the ring might slip out of your vagina. But don't panic – you can still prevent pregnancy. Here's what to do:

» If the NuvaRing® has been out of your vagina for less than 3 hours, rinse it in cool water and put it back in right away. If you put it back in within 3 hours, you'll still be protected from pregnancy.

» If the Annovera® ring has been out of your vagina for more than 2 hours (and you're not on your ring-free week), wash the ring in cool water and put it back in right away. Use a back-up method (like condoms) for the next 7 days.



How should I store the birth control vaginal ring?

You can store the NuvaRing® at room temperature away from direct sunlight for up to 4 months. After 4 months, keep your NuvaRing® in the refrigerator. Read the storage instructions on the package, and always check the expiration date before putting in a new NuvaRing®.

The Annovera® ring comes with a small case you can keep it in when it's not in your vagina. Store Annovera® at room temperature and away from kids and pets. Don't put Annovera® in the refrigerator. If you start using Annovera® on or before the expiration date on the package, it will last for 1 year (13 cycles) after you put it in your vagina.



What are the side effects of the birth control vaginal ring?

Some side effects of the ring are:

- » Headaches
- » Nausea
- » Breast tenderness
- » Changes in your periods, or spotting and bleeding between periods
- » Changes in sex drive
- » Increased vaginal discharge



If any of these side effects bother you, talk to your provider. Rare but serious complications include blood clots in the legs which can travel to the lungs, and toxic shock syndrome.



What are the warning signs of the birth control vaginal ring?

Call your provider right away if you experience:

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



Who is not a good candidate for the birth control vaginal ring?

The ring may not be safe for some people to use. Talk with your Family PACT provider about medications you take or health problems you may have like:

- » Migraine headaches.
- » Over 35 years old and smoke.
- » Have a history of blood clots, heart disease, or stroke.
- » Are being treated for high blood pressure or diabetes.
- » Have a history of breast cancer or liver disease.



The birth control vaginal ring does not protect against HIV or other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Use condoms when you have sex to protect yourself.



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