



ALL ABOUT THE BIRTH CONTROL PATCH



What is the birth control patch?

The birth control patch is a small patch a person puts on their skin once a week to keep from getting pregnant. The patch has two kinds of hormones, estrogen and progestin, like the ones made in a



How does the birth control patch work?

Each birth control patch lasts for 7 days. It contains hormones that are taken in through the skin and go into the bloodstream. These hormones keep the eggs from leaving the ovaries. The progestin also 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 birth control patches: Twirla and Xulane.



93%
EFFECTIVE

How well does the birth control patch work?

The birth control patch is very good at preventing pregnancy. About 7 in 100 sexually active women who use the patch get pregnant in the first year with typical use. The patch does not work as well for people who weigh more than 200 pounds. Ask your Family PACT provider for advice.



How can I get the birth control patch?

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 patch is right for you.



What do people like about the birth control patch?

- » It does not interrupt or interfere with sexual intercourse.
- » It is easy to use.
- » It stays on in the shower, bath, with exercise, and 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 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 patch?

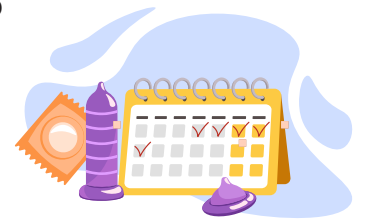
- » You must remember to change it on the same day every week.
- » You risk becoming pregnant if you forget to put on a new one at the same time when it's time to change it.
- » It may leave a sticky residue on the skin that you will need to clean off.
- » It can be seen on your skin.
- » Some people may have problems with side effects.
- » It must be prescribed by a clinician.



How do I use the birth control patch?

Each patch lasts for 7 days. You take the old patch off and put a new patch on a different part of your body. You do this for 3 weeks in a row and wear no patch for the fourth week. After 7 days without a patch, you start again with a new patch. Your Family PACT provider will let you know the date you can start wearing the patch. Ask your provider to show you how to put on the patch.

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



The patch 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 patch, it may not start working right away. A back-up method (like condoms) may be needed if you have sex for the first few days until it becomes effective.

- » If you start the patch within the first 5 days since your period started, no back-up method (like condoms) is needed.
- » If you start the patch 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.

Week 1

- » Clean off any oil, lotion, or make up from a clean, dry area of skin.
- » Put the patch on with care. Press firmly for 10 seconds to make sure it is stuck.
- » Check your patch every day to make sure it's still stuck.
- » Remember to change your patch once a week at the same time. You can set a reminder on your phone to help you remember when to change it.

Week 2 and Week 3

- » After 7 days, take the patch off. Fold it in half and throw it in a trash 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 for each new 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 a new patch.



What are the side effects of the birth control patch?

Some side effects of the patch are:

- » Skin rash or redness where the patch is placed
- » Nausea
- » Breast tenderness
- » Changes in your periods, or spotting and bleeding between periods
- » Headaches
- » Changes in sex drive



If any of these side effects bother you, talk to your provider. A rare but serious complication is blood clots in the legs which can travel to the lungs.



Who is not a good candidate for the birth control patch?

The patch 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



What are the warning signs of the birth control patch?

Call your provider right away if you experience:

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



What if I forget to change my birth control patch or the patch gets loose and falls off?

Even though the patch is easy to use, you might forget to change it on time. Rarely, the patch can loosen or fall off. But don't worry – you can still prevent pregnancy. Depending on what happened and where you're at in your patch cycle, you may need to start a new patch cycle or use a back-up method (like condoms) and emergency contraception (EC). Do the following if you:

Forgot or patch fell off (less than 24 hours):	Forgot or patch fell off (more than 24-48 hours):	Forgot to put on new patch after patch-free week (more than 7 days without a patch):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Stick it back on in the same place right away. » The patch change date and patch cycle stay the same. » No back-up method needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put a new patch on right away. » This is now your new patch change date. » Use back-up method for 7 days. » Use EC if you had unprotected sexual intercourse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put a new patch on right away. » This is your new patch change date and week 1 of the new patch cycle. » Use back-up method for 7 days. » Use EC if you had unprotected sexual intercourse.

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



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