

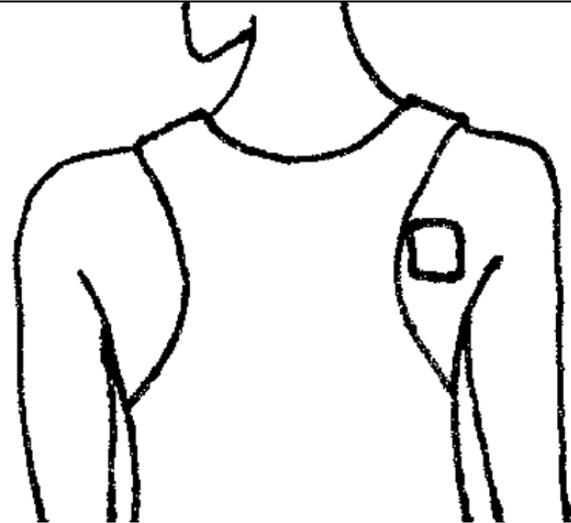


Health Professionals
Committed to the
Reproductive Needs of
Children and Adolescents

Birth Control: The Patch

What is the patch?

The patch is a sticky square, like a bandaid. You put it on your skin each week. It works the same way as the pill by releasing hormones-- estrogen and progestin. It contains the same hormones as birth control pills and it works the same way as the pill by releasing hormones-- estrogen and progestin. These hormones stop the body from releasing eggs and change the lining of your uterus preventing pregnancy. These hormones also change the mucus in your cervix to block sperm. It is prescribed by a health care provider.



How do I use the patch?

Stick the patch to your lower abdomen, buttocks, back or upper arm (but not your breast). Leave the patch on for 7 days. Put a new patch on a different body part each week. Don't wear a patch the 4th week to have your period. Then put on a new patch. The patch can be used to stop periods completely. If you are interested in doing this, you should speak to your health care provider. The patch can be left on during swimming or showering or playing sports.

How do I make the patch work the best?

Keep it in place. Change it on time. If your patch falls off, you can put the same patch on if it has been off for less than 24 hours. If it has been more than 24 hours or you are unsure, put on a new patch and be sure to use a backup method of birth control.

How well does the patch work?

About 9 out of 100 women will become pregnant each year if they don't always use the patch perfectly. Less than 1 out of 100 women will become pregnant each year if they always use the patch perfectly.

What are pros to using the patch?

The patch is very good for pregnancy prevention. You only change the patch once a week so you don't have to remember a daily pill. Periods are usually more regular, lighter and shorter. The patch can also help with acne, cramps and premenstrual syndrome (PMS).

What are cons to using the patch?

The patch doesn't protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) so you still need to use a condom. It doesn't work as well if you are overweight. It can leave a mark on your skin once it is removed. Side effects can include headaches, nausea and breast pain. Talk to your doctor if you take other medications, smoke, have blood clots, high blood pressure, migraine headaches or other medical problems.