

Live Well to

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What is NuvaRing?

NuvaRing is an easy to use hormonal contraceptive device available by prescription.

It contains the same types of hormones (estrogen and progesterone) found in birth control pills.

How does NuvaRing work?

NuvaRing is a clear and flexible ring. When inserted into the vagina, it delivers low levels of synthetic hormones (etonogestrel and ethinyl estradiol) into the body. These hormones are absorbed into the bloodstream, keeping the ovaries from releasing eggs and thickening cervical mucus (making it difficult for sperm to enter the uterus). Used correctly, NuvaRing is >99% effective in preventing pregnancy.

Is NuvaRing right for you?

Advantages

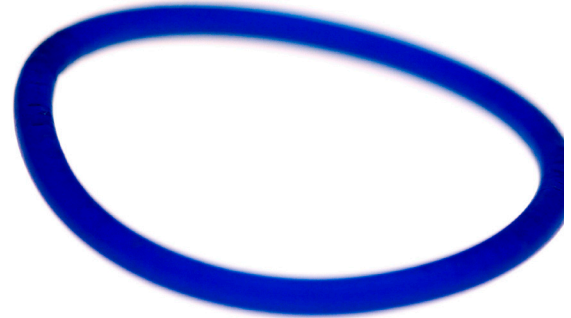
Many people choose NuvaRing because it:

- is easy to use
- provides safe, effective, hormonal contraception
- has lower amounts of estrogen than birth control pills
- may be more convenient to use than other methods (e.g., the pill)
- is easy to insert and to remove
- does not require daily or weekly attention
- maintains regular periods and relieves some menstrual problems (e.g., can shorten periods; reduce the incidence of iron deficiency anemia; minimize cramps and PMS; correct menstrual irregularity/amenorrhea)
- can treat symptoms of endometriosis
- decreases the incidence of ovarian cysts
- lowers the risk of ovarian and endometrial cancer
- can diminish acne
- can be used to lengthen the time between periods, or skip them entirely

Disadvantages

NuvaRing is not right for everyone because:

- the fitting may be uncomfortable for some
- it does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- there may be side effects (e.g. nausea, breast tenderness, moodiness)
- is not an option for those who have contraindications to estrogen



- users must keep track of the number of weeks it is inserted

Side effects

The most frequently reported side effects of the NuvaRing are those associated with other hormonal methods including nausea and/or vomiting, breast tenderness and moodiness. Side effects of hormonal birth control methods typically lessen over time, and usually resolve completely in three to four months.

In some users, NuvaRing can also cause vaginal irritation or increased vaginal discharge. This often resolves on its own, but may necessitate discontinuation if bothersome.

Serious side-effects

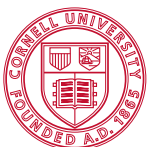
It is important to be aware of the very rare but potentially serious complications that may arise as the result of using hormonal contraception (e.g., gall stones, blood clots). The following are important symptoms, not to be ignored:

- Severe abdominal pain lasting more than 30 minutes
- Severe chest pain or shortness of breath
- Increase in frequency or severity of headaches, especially if associated with weakness, numbness, or vision disturbances
- Loss of vision, double or blurred vision
- Speech problems
- Severe pain in the calf or thighs

Contraindications

Chronic conditions

If you have a chronic medical problem, you will need to discuss the risks of using NuvaRing as it relates to your particular situation. Most of the



time, it is relatively safe. However, if you have any of the following conditions, check with your medical clinician about your ability to use NuvaRing:

- thrombophlebitis, thromboembolic disorders, cerebral vascular disease, coronary artery disease, lipid disorders or past history of these conditions
- markedly impaired liver function or hepatic adenoma; gallbladder disease
- undiagnosed breast masses or known or suspected carcinoma of the breast
- unexplained vaginal / uterine bleeding
- known or suspected pregnancy
- history of migraine headaches
- history of elevated cholesterol
- elevated blood pressure, stroke, or heart disease
- auto-immune disorder (e.g., Lupus)

Cigarette smoking (if over 35)

Smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular problems from hormonal contraceptive use. This risk increases with age and the amount of smoking. Smoking is considered a contraindication for NuvaRing use for those over 35 years of age.

How to get a prescription

- Make an appointment at Cornell Health by phone (607-255-5155) or by going online to myCornellHealth.
- Schedule a Wellness Visit if it is time for a Pap test and/or check-up.
- Schedule a Contraception Appointment if you don't need a check-up, Pap, or STI screening.

How to use NuvaRing

- **First Day:** Start using NuvaRing the first day your normal period begins. This method is effective immediately if used with a normal, on-time period.
- **Quick Start:** Insert NuvaRing Use backup method for 7 days until NuvaRing is effective.

Inserting NuvaRing

- Wash and dry your hands and remove the ring from the foil pouch (Save pouch for disposal after use).
- Find a comfortable position (squatting, lying down, standing with foot resting on chair, bathtub, or whatever else is comfortable for you).
- Pinch NuvaRing between thumb and index fingers and insert ring into your vagina as high as you can (until your finger reaches your cervix). The

muscles of your vaginal wall will hold it in place.

- When in place, it will feel comfortable to wear. (It may or may not surround the cervix and that's okay.) Most women do not feel NuvaRing once it is in place. Don't worry about "losing it" or having it go in "too deep".
- Leave the ring in place for 3 full weeks.

Removing NuvaRing

Once 3 weeks have passed, remove NuvaRing on the same day of the week and the same time of day as you inserted it. Insert your finger into your vagina and "hook" your index finger around the ring. Once you've grasped it, pull it out slowly. It will slide out.

Place the used ring in the foil pouch (or a plastic bag) and discard in the trash. This reduces the chance of estrogen seeping into the soil and water supply. Do NOT flush NuvaRing down the toilet.

You can expect your menstrual period 2-3 days after the ring is removed.

Putting in a new ring

7 days after you take out the old NuvaRing, you will need to insert a new one. Mark insertion and removal times on a calendar to help you keep on track.

Troubleshooting

If the ring slips out of your vagina and

- *fewer than 3 hours have elapsed:* rinse the ring with cool water and reinsert it. (If you need to insert a new ring during the 3 hour time span, continue as if it were the same ring.)
- *more than 3 hours have elapsed:* reinsert the NuvaRing but use a condom as backup protection for the next 7 days.

If you have left your NuvaRing in for longer than four weeks:

- Insert a new NuvaRing and use condoms as backup birth control for the next 7 days. Also if you had vaginal intercourse during the extended time that the NuvaRing was in place and did not use back-up protection (e.g. a condom), you may want to consider using Emergency Contraception (EC).

If your partner objects to the feel of the ring during intercourse:

- it can be removed without losing contraceptive benefit. It must be

reinserted within 3 hours of removal.

NOTE: NuvaRing should not be out of the vagina for more than three hours total on any given day.

If you are taking certain medications

Some drugs you take for medical conditions may decrease the effectiveness of NuvaRing. If you are using any of the following drugs, tell your clinician:

- Rifampin
- Griseofulvin
- Phenytoin
- Phenobarbital
- Topiramate
- Carbamazepine
- Antiretrovirals
- St. John's Wort

Inform all health care providers that you use NuvaRing, especially if you are in a leg cast or scheduled for surgery. If you have any questions, ask.

Additional considerations

No hormonal method of birth control protects against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. Latex barriers (condoms, latex squares) are the best way to protect against STIs. Always use a latex barrier in addition to NuvaRing if you and/or your partner have had other sex partners. Condoms, lubricants, and other sexual health products can be purchased at the Cornell Health Pharmacy.

The use of a tampon, spermicide or vaginal yeast product will not alter the contraceptive efficacy of the NuvaRing.

The NuvaRing can be stored for up to 4 months at room temperature. Avoid placing it in direct sunlight or at temperatures higher than 86 degrees. Storing it in a refrigerator will extend it's life.

Unsure if it is right for you?

Consider scheduling an appointment with a sexual health nurse to learn more about NuvaRing and other contraceptive options.

For more information

- plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control/birth-control-vaginal-ring-nuvaring
- nuvaring.com

Note: This fact sheet is not intended to replace the package insert. Please refer to the package insert for more