How it works

Like other birth control methods that use hormones, NuvaRing stops your ovaries from releasing an egg each month. When no egg is released, you cannot get pregnant. The ring also makes the cervical mucus thicker, making it harder for sperm to get to the egg.

If used correctly, NuvaRing is about 98-99% effective in protecting against pregnancy. No birth control method is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy.

NuvaRing does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Use a latex or polyurethane condom each time you have sex to protect yourself against STIs. Using condoms and NuvaRing together makes it even more unlikely that you will get pregnant.

Benefits

- Regular menstrual periods
- Easy to use –no pills or shots
- Lower levels of hormones than some of the other birth control medications
- Convenient you do not have to think about it much
- Less bleeding and cramping with your period

Side Effects

Many people experience some of the following side effects during the first month or two of use. This happens because your body is getting used to the hormones.

- Vaginal discomfort
- Heavier vaginal discharge
- Headache
- Weight gain
- Feeling sick to your stomach
- Breast tenderness
- Irregular bleeding or spotting

The following **serious side effects** can also occur, but they are rare.

- Severe abdominal pain or vomiting
- Chest pains
- Shortness of breath
- Headaches
- Blurred vision or loss of vision
- Severe leg pain or swelling

If you have any of these serious side effects, you should remove your ring and go to your clinic or a hospital. You must use another form of birth control or not have sex to prevent pregnancy.

We recommend that you do not smoke cigarettes or use tobacco while using NuvaRing. Smoking increases the chance for serious side effects.

Ask the clinic for help on how to quit.

How to use it

You insert NuvaRing in the vagina. You then keep it in place for three weeks (21 days). Remove it for one week and then insert a new ring. During the one-week break you will usually have your period.

Getting Started:

- Insert NuvaRing anytime during the first five days of your period. The last day that you can insert it is day 5, even if you haven't stopped bleeding yet.
- It will take seven days for NuvaRing to start working. During this time you must either not have sex or use condoms.
- Each NuvaRing comes in a reclosable foil pouch. After you remove NuvaRing, keep the foil pouch for disposal of the ring later.

How to insert NuvaRing:

- 1. Wash and dry your hands. Remove the ring from its foil pouch (keep the pouch).
- Choose the position that is most comfortable for you. You may find it's helpful to lie down, squat, or stand with one leg up while inserting the NuvaRing.
- 3. Hold NuvaRing between your thumb and index finger and press the two sides together.

more ₹

- 4. Gently push the folded ring into your vagina. As long as the ring is inside the vagina it will work. The exact position of it is not important, however, the further it is pushed back, the less likely it is to slip out.
- 5. The NuvaRing should not feel uncomfortable once it is inserted. If it feels uncomfortable, you should use your finger to gently push it further into the vagina. There is no danger of it being pushed too far up in the vagina or getting lost.
- 6. Once it's in, keep NuvaRing in place for 3 weeks. It is not recommended to remove it during sex.

How to remove NuvaRing

Remove the ring three weeks after you put it in, on the same day of the week as it was inserted, at about the same time. For example, if you put the ring in on Monday at 7 p.m., then the ring should be removed three weeks later on Monday at about 7 p.m.

Your NuvaRing can be removed by hooking your finger around the rim and pulling it out. Put the used ring in the foil pouch you saved and throw it away. Do NOT flush it down the toilet.

After 6 to 7 days (but **no longer** than 7 days), insert a new ring. You may not have finished bleeding when it is time to put in a new ring. You must insert the new ring on time, or you may get

pregnant. It is all right to use tampons while using NuvaRing.

Things to know

- All your health providers should know you are using NuvaRing: call your clinic. Some uncommon medications can change its ability to protect against pregnancy.
- Store it in its foil pouch at room temperature and out of direct sunlight.
- If NuvaRing slips out of the vagina and it has been less than three hours, you should still be protected from pregnancy. Rinse the ring with cool to lukewarm water and put it back in as soon as possible. If you have lost the NuvaRing, put in a new one and keep the same schedule as before. That means you should still remove it when you should have removed the one you lost.
- If the ring has been out of the vagina for more than three hours, you may not be protected from pregnancy.
 Reinsert the ring as soon as possible and use condoms for the next 7 days.
 You may also abstain from sex for a week to avoid pregnancy.
- If the ring is out more than 3 hours or you wait longer than 7 days to insert a new ring and you have sex without condoms, you should take a pregnancy test in two weeks.

63

Version: 8/11



Minneapolis School Based Clinics NuvaRing

www.facebook.com/mplssbc www.minneapolismn.gov/health

What is it?

NuvaRing is a small, flexible ring that you insert inside your vagina. You wear NuvaRing for three weeks and then remove it for one week.

NuvaRing has hormones in it called estrogen and progesterone. These hormones are like the ones that your body makes to control your period.

The hormones are absorbed into your blood through the skin in your vagina while you are wearing NuvaRing.

These are the same hormones that are in Birth Control Pills.