

## What if the Patch becomes loose or falls off?

- If the patch becomes loose or has fallen off for less than 24 hours, try to re-apply it to the same place or apply a new patch immediately. **Do not try to re-apply if the patch is no longer sticky as the hormones are contained in the same layer of the patch as the glue. Adequate hormones to prevent pregnancy may not be released.**
- If the patch becomes loose or has fallen off for more than one day, start a new four week cycle immediately by putting on a new patch. You now have a new "Patch Change Day". You must **use back-up** method, such as condom, spermicide, or diaphragm for the first week of your new cycle.

## What if you forget to change the patch?



- If you forget to apply your patch at the start of any patch cycle, apply the first patch of your new cycle as soon as you remember. You now have a new "Patch Change Day". You must use back-up method for one week.
- If you forget to change your patch for one or two days in the middle of you patch cycle, apply a new patch as soon as you remember and apply your next patch on your normal "Patch Change Day". No back-up method is needed.
- If you forget to change your patch for more than two days, start a new four week cycle as soon as you remember by putting on a new patch. You now have a different "Patch Change Day". You must use back-up method for the first week of your new cycle.
- If you forget to remove your patch at the end of your patch cycle, take it off as soon as you remember. Start your next cycle on your normal "Patch Change Day". No back-up method is needed.

## Can you change the "Patch Change Day"?

If you wish to change the "Patch Change Day", follow these instructions:



- Complete the current cycle
- Remove the third contraceptive patch on the correct day.
- Select a new Patch Change Day by applying a new patch on the desired day during the patch free week.
- Never leave the patch off for more than 7 days.

## What are the side effects?

Since the hormones are similar to those in the birth control pills, the side effects are also similar. The most common side effects are breast tenderness, headache, nausea, cramps, and application site reactions. More serious risks include blood clots, stroke and heart attack. These risks increase if you smoke or use tobacco.

**WARNING:** The manufacturer has issued the following warning: "Hormones from patches applied to the skin get into the blood stream and are removed from the body differently than hormones from birth control pills taken by mouth. You will be exposed to about 60% more estrogen if you use ORTHO EVRA than if you use a typical birth control pill containing 35 micrograms of estrogen. In general, increased estrogen exposure may increase the risk of side effects. However, it is not known if there are differences in the risk of serious side effects based on the differences between ORTHO EVRA and a birth control pill containing 35 micrograms of estrogen. Talk to your healthcare provider about how this information relates to your use of ORTHO EVRA."



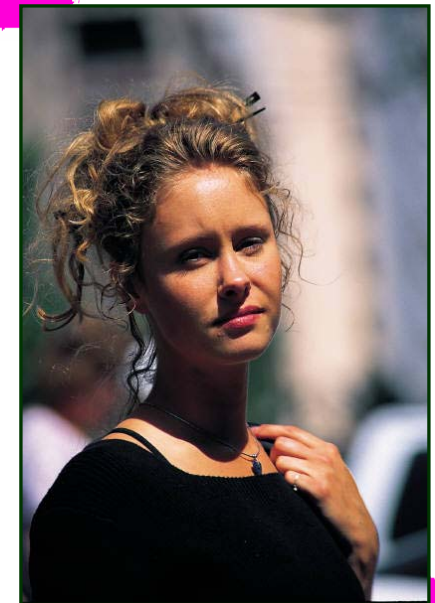
South Dakota Family Planning  
Department of Health

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# The Patch

## How do I use it? Is it right for me?



## What is Ortho-Evra?

Ortho-Evra is a highly effective reversible method of contraception that is worn on the skin. The patch is a thin, beige, flexible square, containing the hormones estrogen and progestin. It is worn for one week and replaced on the same day of the week for three consecutive weeks, with the fourth week "patch free".



## How does the patch prevent pregnancy?

The hormones are released through the skin and into the blood stream continuously. They prevent pregnancy the same way as birth control pills: preventing ovulation, causing changes in the cervical mucus so that sperm cannot get through, and changing the lining of the uterus.

## How effective is the patch?

Like birth control pills, the contraceptive patch is 99% effective in preventing pregnancy when used correctly. It offers no protection against HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.



## How do I use the patch?

If this is the first time you are using the patch, wait until the day you get your menstrual period. Apply your first patch during the first 24 hours of your menstrual period or apply it on the first Sunday after your menstrual period starts. **If you don't apply your first patch during the first 24 hours of your period, back-up contraception, such as a condom, spermicide, or diaphragm must be used for the first week of your first cycle after first starting to use the patch.**

- The day you apply your first patch becomes your "Patch Change Day" and you will replace your patch on this same day each week for the next two weeks.
- Do not apply a patch on week four. Your period should start during this week.
- You should apply the patch to clean, dry skin with no redness, irritation, or cuts. To make sure that the patch sticks properly, you should avoid using creams, lotions, oils, powder, or make-up on or near the site where the patch is to be applied. Open the foil pouch by tearing it along the top edge and one side.
- The patch can be applied to the abdomen, buttock, upper outer arm, or upper torso but not the breasts. You can wear it in the same location each week but you should apply it to a different spot on the skin in that area.



buttocks



abdomen



Upper outer arm



Upper torso  
(front and back  
except on your breast)

- To apply the patch:
  1. Peel the foil pouch apart and open it flat.
  2. Grasp a corner of the patch firmly, and gently remove it from the foil pouch.
  3. Using your fingernails, lift one corner of the patch, and peel the patch and the liner off the foil liner, being careful not to accidentally remove the clear liner from the patch.
  4. Peel away half of the clear protective liner without touching the sticky surface of the patch.
  5. Apply the sticky surface of the patch to clean, dry skin and remove the other half of the liner.
  6. Press down firmly on the contraceptive patch with the palm of the hand for 10 seconds, making sure that the edges stick well. Run a finger around the edge of the contraceptive patch to make sure that it is firmly in place.
  7. Check the patch every day to make sure that it is still sticking firmly.
- To remove a patch, simply lift one corner and quickly peel it back. Because a used patch still contains some active hormones, you should fold the patch in half so that it sticks to itself before you throw it away.