



**YOUR
HEALTH.
YOUR
CHOICE.**

EVRA[®] –

The Contraceptive Patch

Talk to your partner about birth control before you have sex. You can use latex condoms to lower your chances of getting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and prevent an unwanted pregnancy.

What is Evra?

EVRA[®] is the birth control patch. It is a thin, flexible square patch you wear on your body. EVRA[®] is highly effective in preventing pregnancy when used correctly. You wear each EVRA[®] birth control patch for 1 week at a time. Each week, the patch continuously delivers hormones through the skin and into the bloodstream for a full 7 days to prevent pregnancy. You can wear the patch on your buttock, abdomen, upper torso (excluding breasts), or on the outside of your arm.

How does the Evra work?

The patch prevents pregnancy in two ways:

- ★ The release of an egg from the ovaries during the process of ovulation is suppressed.
- ★ The hormones in the patch help to create a mucous barrier at the opening of your cervix to prevent sperm from entering your uterus.

How effective is Evra?

If used correctly, EVRA[®] is 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. EVRA[®] may be less effective in women who weigh more than 198 pounds (90 kg).

How do you use Evra?

Read the instructions that come with Evra.

There are two options available when starting the contraceptive patch. It is important to remember that whatever day you start the patch is your 'patch change day'

Week 1

- ★ **First Day Start:** Apply your first patch during the first 24 hours of your period. If you choose to start after day 1 of your period, a back up method should be used for the first 7 days.
- ★ **Sunday Start:** Apply your first patch on the first Sunday after your period starts. You must use back up contraception for the first week of your cycle.
- ★ Wear the patch continuously for 7 days.

Week 2

- ★ On Day 8, remove the patch, discard it, and apply a new one immediately. To avoid irritation, do not apply the new patch to the exact same place on your skin.

Week 3

- ★ Apply a new patch on Day 15.

It is important to use condoms or a latex barrier with sexual partners to decrease the risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection.

Week 4

- ★ Do not wear a patch on Week 4. Your period should start during this week.
- ★ Begin the next 4-week cycle by applying the new patch on the normal 'patch change day', no matter when your period begins or ends.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of Evra?

Advantages

- ★ Your chances of getting pregnant are very low.
- ★ It may reduce the incidence of cervical and endometrial cancer.
- ★ It is a reversible form of birth control.
- ★ You don't have to interrupt sex.
- ★ Your partner doesn't have to be involved.
- ★ You can wear the patch while exercising, swimming or in the shower.

Disadvantages

- ★ A doctor has to give you the prescription.
- ★ You might not be able to use it if you have certain health problems.
- ★ If the patch falls off or becomes partially detached from your skin, it will not work properly.
- ★ It may cause skin irritation.
- ★ You're not protected against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

What are common side-effects of EVRA ?

Common side-effects of EVRA are nausea, headaches, breast swelling, water retention and depression. EVRA may also reduce cramping and shorten the number of days of bleeding during your period.

A very small number of women suffer more serious side effects. There is a risk of getting heart attacks, strokes, blood clots in the veins, or liver tumors. Women who take EVRA should not smoke.

Where can you get EVRA ?

You need to go to a health practitioner to see if the contraceptive patch is right for you; the patch requires a prescription.

If you need further information or would like to book an appointment, call:

Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services for youth ages 13 to 29. 416-927-7171. Health Services offers same-day, scheduled and drop-in appointments. For more information visit www.ppt.on.ca.

Women's Programming at the Bay Centre for Birth Control for women of all ages at 416-351-3700.

Youth can also access information about sexual health by calling the Teen Sex InfoLine at 416-961-3200 or chat live using MSN messenger at spiderbytes@hotmail.com from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and 12 noon to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. You can also email us a question anytime at askus@spiderbytes.ca or visit www.spiderbytes.ca.