



**YOUR  
HEALTH.  
YOUR  
CHOICE.**

# NuvaRing

## The Contraceptive Vaginal Ring

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 the NuvaRing?

NuvaRing is a once a month hormonal contraceptive. It is a small ring that is inserted in the vagina that remains in place continuously for 3 weeks. Like birth control pills, NuvaRing is highly effective in preventing pregnancy when used correctly. For 3 weeks, the ring continuously delivers hormones through the vagina and into the bloodstream to prevent pregnancy. The ring is removed for a one week interval, after which a new ring is inserted.

### How does the NuvaRing work?

The NuvaRing prevents pregnancy in the following ways:

- ★ It stops your ovaries from releasing an egg each month.
- ★ It makes the mucus in the cervix thicker. It is harder for the sperm to travel into the cervix. The cervix is the opening to the uterus.
- ★ The lining of the uterus becomes thinner. This makes it harder for a fertilized egg to attach to the uterus.

### How effective is the NuvaRing?

Like other forms of birth control, the effectiveness rate of the contraceptive ring may vary, depending on its use. If used correctly, NuvaRing is 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. NuvaRing may be less effective, however, in women with a body weight that is greater than 198 pounds (90kg).

### How do you use the NuvaRing?

- ★ Read the instructions that come with the NuvaRing.
- ★ Insert your first ring between Day 1 and Day 5 of your period (Day 1 is the first day of your menstrual period).
- ★ You must use a back up method (i.e. condoms) for the first 7 days of ring use.
- ★ If you are switching from birth control pills, insert the ring on the day you would have started a new pack.
- ★ Remove the ring on Week 4. Your period should start during this week.
- ★ Begin the next 4 week cycle by inserting a new ring at the end of the one-week, ring free interval.

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

### **What are the advantages and disadvantages of the NuvaRing?**

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.

If you smoke or have high blood pressure, the risk is even higher.

#### **Advantages**

- ★ It has the lowest dose of estrogen (15ug) of any combined contraceptive
- ★ Your chances of getting pregnant are low
- ★ It can alleviate premenstrual cramping and regulate your periods
- ★ 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 ring while exercising, swimming or in the shower

#### **Disadvantages**

- ★ May be challenging to insert for some women
- ★ A doctor has to give you a prescription
- ★ You might not be able to use it if you have certain health problems
- ★ If the ring falls out, it will not work
- ★ You're not protected against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- ★ If the ring is out of your vagina for more than 3 hours, it may not work effectively when you put it back in. To prevent pregnancy, you will need to use another form of birth control until the ring has been in all the time for 7 days in a row.

### **Where can you get the NuvaRing?**

You need a prescription to get NuvaRing. You can get the NuvaRing at The House Community Health Centre, and at most pharmacies and sexual health clinics.

#### **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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:askus@spiderbytes.ca) or visit [www.spiderbytes.ca](http://www.spiderbytes.ca).