

## **Orth-Evra - The birth control patch.**

### **How Does it Work?**

There are many drugs which can be delivered thru the skin and achieve the same or better benefit to the body. The birth control patch is one of these products.

The patch, which contains the active ingredients in a birth control pill (estrogen and progestin), delivers continuous levels of hormones to your system thru your skin. The patch works exactly like a birth control pill to prevent pregnancy: thickens mucus in the genital tract, prevents the formation of eggs and prevents ovulation.

In some women who find taking the birth control pill daily difficult, the patch can offer more effective pregnancy prevention and menstrual control. The patch can be 97-99% effective in preventing pregnancy.

### **Where Do I Put it?**

You have 4 choices: the lower abdomen, buttocks, upper, outer arm or back of the shoulder. The patch should never be applied to the chest or breasts.

Buttock



- Upper Torso (front and back, excluding breasts)



- Abdomen



- Upper Outer Arm



To ensure the effectiveness of ORTHO EVRA<sup>®</sup>, do not place the Patch on areas of your skin where makeup, lotions, creams, powders or other products are or will be applied. In addition, do not place ORTHO EVRA<sup>®</sup> on skin that is red, irritated or cut.

Women change the location of the patch weekly to avoid skin irritation and enable you to remove the adhesive from the old site.

When removing your used patch, simply lift one corner and quickly peel it back. If a small ring of adhesive is left on your skin, remove it by rubbing a small amount of baby oil on the area.

The Patch adheres well to the skin, allowing you to perform your daily activities such as bathing, showering, swimming and exercising without interruption. If the sticky surface of the Patch becomes wet, discard it and apply a new patch.

Once you have prepared the skin and applied the patch you will not be able to remove it and place it in a new location. The adhesive is unlikely to adhere adequately. You will have to use another patch.

Patches cannot be altered or cut. Modifying the patch will decrease the effectiveness in preventing pregnancy and controlling your periods.

## When do I start the Patch?

Apply your first patch on the first day of your period. The patch will be effective in two weeks. Apply a patch every 7 days for 3 weeks. Remove the patch for one week while you have your period and then refill your prescription and re-apply the patch for the next cycle.

You can delay your periods or have fewer periods by using your patch for more than 3 weeks. Ask your health care provider about this option.

## Helpful Reminders

You will need to change the patch every 7 days to maintain effective period control and pregnancy prevention. Although you using the patch means that you will not have to take a daily birth control pill, you must still remember to change the patch weekly. Try these ideas to remind you:

- Set the alarm on your cell phone for a weekly reminder
- Make it part of your routine to change your patch before your first class on Monday morning
- Add a weekly reminder to the calendar on your work and/or personal e-mail
- Keep a weekly “to do” list, and add a Patch reminder to that agenda
- Put a yellow sticky note on the bathroom mirror: “TUESDAY!” Only you will understand the meaning.
- Keep a calendar on your refrigerator and circle all “Patch Change Days” for the year

In clinical trials, less than 2% of birth control patches had to be replaced because of complete detachment, and less than 3% had to be replaced because of partial detachment. Proper preparation of the skin will ensure that your patch will stick for a week thru exercise, swimming and bathing. Still, you should ask your provider for an extra prescription that allows you to obtain **just one patch** at the pharmacy in case you need to replace one.

See this web site for further information: [www.orthoevra.com](http://www.orthoevra.com)

