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# NUVA RING

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## Background Information

The Nuva Ring is a slender, flexible, transparent ring, which is inserted into the vagina once per month. Low-doses of estrogen and progestin (similar to the hormones found naturally in the body and used in combined birth control pills) are released. These hormones, when provided in adequate amounts, prevent ovulation—if there is no egg to meet the sperm, pregnancy cannot occur. In addition they have a reversible effect on cervical mucous and uterine lining, which also discourages pregnancy. Under ideal conditions, the Nuva Ring is 98-99% effective.

Like any other combination\* hormonal birth control method, there is no conclusive evidence the Nuva Ring causes cancer. Recent data has shown a lower incidence of uterine and ovarian cancer in women who have used combination hormonal birth control methods. More research needs to be done regarding its relationship to breast and cervical cancer. Possible benefits of using combined contraceptives include a decreased incidence of : ovarian cysts, benign breast changes, iron deficiency anemia, pelvic infections, ectopic pregnancy, acne, menstrual cramps, and prolonged, heavy menstrual flow. \*containing estrogen and progesterone

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## Instructions for Use

- Quickstart: Insert the ring the day you get your prescription. Unless this is within 5 days of the start of your menstrual period, use a back-up method like condoms for 7 days OR
- First Day Start: Insert the Nuva Ring between Day 1 and Day 5 of your menstrual cycle, even if you have not stopped bleeding. No additional contraception is needed
- The Nuva Ring is inserted by pressing opposite sides of the Ring together and gently pushing the folded Ring into the vagina. The position of the Ring in the vagina is not important, however, it should not be uncomfortable.
- The Ring should be left in place for 3 consecutive weeks. After 3 weeks, the Ring should be removed for 1 week, during which you should experience withdrawal bleeding (a menstrual bleeding).
- After 1 week, you should insert a new Ring, even if you are still bleeding.
- Repeat the cycle (3 week use, 1 week off) each month. If continuous cycling is desired to avoid a menstrual period, stop the ring free week and insert a new ring.

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***Avoid storing Nuva Ring in direct sunlight or at temperatures above 86 degrees Fahrenheit.***

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## Recommended Actions After Delayed Insertion or Reinsertion With Combined Vaginal Ring

Delayed insertion of a new ring or delayed reinsertion\* of a current ring for <48 hours since a ring should have been inserted

- Insert ring as soon as possible.
- Keep the ring in until the scheduled ring removal day.
- No additional contraceptive protection is needed.
- Emergency contraception is not usually needed but can be considered if delayed insertion or reinsertion occurred earlier in the cycle or in the last week of the previous cycle.

Delayed insertion of a new ring or delayed reinsertion\* for ≥48 hours since a ring should have been inserted

- Insert ring as soon as possible.
- Keep the ring in until the scheduled ring removal day.
- Use back-up contraception (e.g. condoms) or avoid sexual intercourse until a ring has been worn for 7 consecutive days.
- If the ring removal occurred in the third week of ring use:
  - Omit the hormone-free week by finishing the third week of ring use and starting a new ring immediately.
  - If unable to start a new ring immediately, use back-up contraception (e.g. condoms) or avoid sexual intercourse until a new ring has been worn for 7 consecutive days.
- Emergency contraception should be considered if the delayed insertion or reinsertion occurred within the first week of ring use and unprotected sexual intercourse occurred in the previous 5 days.
- Emergency contraception may also be considered at other times as appropriate.

\*If removal takes place but the woman is unsure of how long the ring has been removed, consider the ring to have been removed for ≥48 hours since a ring should have been inserted or reinserted.

***Dispose of the Nuva Ring in the same packet in which it is dispensed.***

Women with conditions affecting the vagina, such as prolapsed (dropped) uterus, may be more likely to have Nuva Ring slip out of the vagina. If the Ring slips out repeatedly, you should consult your healthcare provider.

**Answers to the most common questions about the Nuva Ring**

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| <p>What should I do if I am spotting or having my period (withdrawal bleeding) when I don't expect it?</p>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep using the Nuva Ring. Consult a clinic Advice Nurse <b>643-7197</b>.</li> <li>• Practice abstinence or use a back-up method during intercourse until the problem is resolved.</li> </ul>                                                                      |
| <p>If I miss a period (withdrawal bleeding) but I have used the Nuva Ring correctly, do I need to worry that I may be pregnant?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some women who use the Nuva Ring miss withdrawal bleeding (period) every now and then. If you are using the ring for contraception, consider getting a pregnancy test. If you have additional concerns, consult a clinic Advice Nurse <b>643-7197</b>.</li> </ul> |

**Temporary Minor Discomforts**

Some women experience a variety of minor discomforts when starting combined contraceptives, including the Nuva Ring. Some of these symptoms may be nausea, breakthrough bleeding, breast enlargement or tenderness, slight weight gain, mood changes, and changes in libido. Most symptoms will disappear within the first three months of using the Nuva Ring. Acne, although often improved in the long run, may worsen for a couple of months when you first start the Nuva Ring. If any of your symptoms are severe or persist, call a clinic Advice Nurse at 643-7197.

Potential side effects unique to the Nuva Ring: increased vaginal discharge and increased number of vaginal infections or vaginal irritation, foreign body sensation in the vagina, problems during intercourse, expulsion, and vaginal discomfort.

**The Nuva Ring Danger Signs**

<p>Abdominal pain (severe)</p> <p>Chest pain (severe)/shortness of breath/coughing up blood</p> <p>Headaches (severe)/dizziness/weakness/numbness</p> <p>Eye problems (vision loss or blurring)/speech problems</p> <p>Severe leg pain of calf or thigh</p>	<p>If you develop any of these symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call or immediately come to Urgent Care <b>642-3188</b>, or other emergency medical facility</li> <li>▪ <b>Call 911</b> in an extreme emergency</li> </ul>
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**Major Nuva Ring Complications**

The most serious risk of combined contraceptives is the potential for cardiovascular complications: blood clots, stroke, hypertension, or heart attack. These side-effects are extremely rare and occur most often in women who smoke, who are over age 35, who have other health problems like hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, vascular disease, or blood clots, and those who have a family history of diabetes or heart attack under the age of 50. If you smoke, you may have an increased risk for developing major complications. Young, healthy, non-smoking women can use the Nuva Ring with very little risk of developing serious complications. Learn the Nuva Ring Danger Signs listed above.

**The Nuva Ring and Other Drugs**

The Ring may have adverse interactions with some other medications. In some cases contraceptive effectiveness is lowered. In a few cases another drug may reach a toxic level in combination with the Ring. Be sure to inform your clinician and pharmacist at each visit of any medications, including non-prescription drugs, you are taking. **Always advise any clinician that you see for any medical problem, especially if admitted to a hospital or before surgery, that you are using Nuva Ring.**

**Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Preventative Care**

The Nuva Ring doesn't protect against sexually transmitted diseases. Even though you are using the Nuva Ring, seriously consider using condoms as well in order to protect each other from sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) e.g., herpes, chlamydia, syphilis, HIV, etc. Pap testing is recommended starting at age 21. See the UHS website for screening recommendations, self-directed testing and scheduling an appointment. <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/medical/primary-care/sexual-health-care-tang>