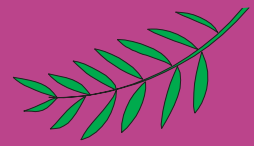


# Ortho Evra



The Ortho Evra patch is a hormonal birth control patch that is worn on the skin to prevent pregnancy. The patch contains the hormones norelgestromin and ethinyl estradiol (progestin and estrogen, respectively) and delivers continuous levels of hormone through the skin and into the bloodstream (transdermal administration). The patch prevents pregnancy in the same way birth control pills do, preventing ovulation and changing the cervical mucus, making it more difficult for sperm to enter the uterus. Each patch delivers the same amount of medication each week, therefore you can use the patches in any order. They are all the same. As with any birth control method, correct and consistent use is the key, which is why it is important to use Ortho Evra correctly.

We expect the benefits to be the same as with the birth control pill: regular menstrual periods, less cramping, reduced menstrual flow, improvement of acne, less anemia, decreased incidence of functional ovarian cysts, decreased incidence of ectopic (tubal) pregnancy as well, as significant protection from ovarian and endometrial (uterine lining) cancers, decreased incidence of pelvic inflammatory disease and decreased incidence of non-cancerous breast problems.

The patch is worn for one week and replaced on the same day of the week with a new patch for three consecutive weeks. The fourth week is patch free. A period is expected during the patch free week. Following week four, the same application routine is repeated. The patch combines the effectiveness of the pill with once a week dosing. The patch is a very thin, smooth, beige patch that measures 1/3 inches on all 4 sides.

**APPLYING THE PATCH:** The patch may be worn on the buttock, abdomen (avoid the waistline), upper torso (excluding the breasts), or upper outer arm. Wear the patch continuously for 7 days. On day 8 (patch change day) remove the used patch, fold it in half so it sticks to itself and wash your hands to wash off any hormone. Discard the patch and apply a new one immediately to one of the 4 areas described above. Apply a new patch for week 2 and repeat the same for week 3. To avoid skin irritation, do not apply the patch to the same exact place on your skin. Do not apply a patch for week 4. This will be your period week. After your period week, begin a new 4 week cycle by applying a new patch. Each new patch should be applied on the same day of each week. This will be your patch change day.

Apply the patch to skin that is cleaned and dried. Avoid lotions, powders, creams and make-up on that area. Press firmly with the palm of your hand for 10 seconds, making sure the edges stick well. The heat of your hand helps activate the adhesive. Run your fingers around the edge of the patch to ensure it is sticking properly. Check your patch every day to make sure it is sticking. If your patch edges lift up, press down firmly with the palm of your hand for 10 seconds. If your patch does not stick well, apply a replacement patch. The patch remains attached and effective when you bathe, swim, exercise or wear it in humid conditions. In clinical trials, less than 2% of patches had to be replaced because of complete detachment. And less than 3% had to be replaced because of partial detachment.

It is not recommended to change the location of a patch in the middle

of your week. Attempting to change the location of a patch in the middle of your week may cause it to become loose as you try to reapply it. Store the patch at room temperature.

## "SUNDAY START"

Apply your first patch the first Sunday of your period (whether you are still bleeding or not). If your period starts on a Sunday, apply your patch that same day. Sunday will be your patch change day. You must use non-hormonal backup contraception, such as a condom, spermicide, or a diaphragm for the first week of your first cycle, but we recommend back-up for at least one month, until you are in the habit of changing your patch routinely. Sunday will be your patch change day. ONLY the first patch is based on when your period starts.

## "FIRST DAY START"

Apply your first patch on the day your period starts. This is your patch change day. Use backup contraception as above for the first week. However, we recommend back-up for a month until you are in the habit of changing your patch routinely. Change your patch as above for week 2 and week 3. Do not wear a patch for week 4, the week you will have your period. Start a new patch on your patch change day.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS:

The serious side effects are similar to those from birth control pills. Serious side effects are related to blood clots, which can occur anywhere in your circulatory system. Heart attack, stroke, pulmonary embolism, and deep vein blood clots in your leg are SERIOUS side effects. These occur infrequently. The high risk group are women who are over 35 years old, women who are obese or women who smoke cigarettes, but these side effects can happen to young women.

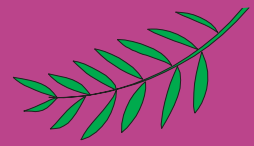
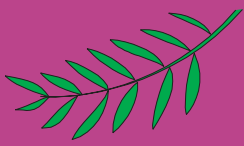
## THE SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS INCLUDE:

"ACHES"

- A-** severe abdominal pain
- C-** severe chest pain, and shortness of breath
- H-** severe headache
- E-** eye problems (loss of vision, flashing lights, etc)
- S-** severe pain in the calf or thigh

Severe pain anywhere should make you seek medical care. If you have any of these symptoms you should contact **Women's Health @ 862-1806**. When Health Services is closed, call 862-1530 and choose the option on the menu to talk to the nurse at the emergency room at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital, or call your own medical clinician.

In clinical trials, some women experienced breast symptoms (increased size and tenderness), headache, application site reaction, nausea, upper respiratory infection, menstrual cramps and abdominal pain.



Possible NUISANCE side effects include, but not limited to:

**Nausea**

**Breakthrough bleeding**

**Breast changes:** If you have breast enlargement and/or tenderness that lasts 2-3 cycles you may need to discuss a change. If you have breast enlargement and this is not a problem for you then nothing needs to be changed.

**Weight:** A weight gain is not expected when you begin hormonal contraceptives, but may occur for some women. A gain of 10 lbs. or more will require an appointment and a contraceptive change. A gain or loss of 3-5 lbs. is not medically significant.

**Mood changes:** Feeling tired, minor headaches, or malaise (feeling "blah") can be minimized by taking Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) 50-150 mg. every day. Try the B6 for 2 months to see if it will be effective. B6 is very inexpensive and is available at supermarkets, pharmacies and health food stores. Excess is excreted in the urine, which will be bright yellow in color.

**Depression:** If you become depressed or depression increases with hormonal contraceptives, discuss with your medical clinician (or another Women's Health staff member) as soon as possible.

**Other nuisance side effects:** If you experience other nuisance side effects that do not go away after several cycles call and make an appointment with your provider to discuss the problem.

Most NUISANCE side effects will disappear after 2-3 cycles of use. If you are experiencing NUISANCE side effects, call us at 862-1806. If you are not at school, call your own medical clinician, Planned Parenthood or a family planning clinic for advice. Please keep track of when in your cycle the side effects occur.

For Your Information:

- The delivery of hormones through your skin from the patch should not be affected if you have diarrhea or are vomiting.
- Always inform your medical clinician that you are on the patch.
- Some drugs/medications may interfere with the effectiveness of your patch. Always ask your medical clinician and/or your pharmacist about medications that you are taking. There are no known non-prescription medications that affect the patch. St. John's Wort may cause birth control pills to be less effective. The same could be true of the patch.
- Always check the expiration date on your patch. The patches do not expire until the end of the month listed.
- As with the pill, most women can be on the patch indefinitely.
- There is no need to take rest periods or breaks from hormonal contraception unless advised by your medical clinician.
- The patch does not cause infertility.
- A woman's annual health exam is the same as a "physical."
- If you have any doubt whether or not you are "protected" from pregnancy, assume that you are not protected, abstain or use back up contraception and call for advice.

**REMEMBER THAT THE PATCH DOES NOT PROTECT YOU FROM SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES. ONLY CONDOMS CAN HELP PROTECT YOU FROM SOME SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES.**

If you are having difficulty adjusting to the patch, please contact your own health care provider or us. If you decide to discontinue the patch, please make an appointment to discuss an alternative method of birth control. Try to continue the patch until your appointment.

**ECPs' (morning after pills) are available at Health Services whenever Health Services is open. ECP can be taken up to 5 days. Statistics are much better if taken within 25 hours. Please call and be seen as soon as possible. Remember, Health Services is open on weekends 12-4 p.m. Call 862-1806 to schedule an appointment.**

Cycles (pack of 3 patches) have been ordered in the Health Services pharmacy for you now. Before you can purchase more you will need an appointment for a "Patch Follow Up." At that time you will have a blood pressure check, your weight checked and discuss with your health care provider any concerns you may have. You will have enough packs of patches ordered then for you to carry you to your next exam. You can then go directly to the pharmacy to purchase them without an appointment. Your next annual physical exam will be due, and at that time your prescription will be renewed for the next year. Your prescription expires one year from the date it starts whether you have purchased all your patches or not.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SPEAK WITH A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM AT 862-1806.**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Weekdays during break you can talk to a practitioner at 862-1530. (8 - 4:30 p.m.)



## HEALTH SERVICES

(603)862-2856 (during hours of operation)|(603) 862-1530 (after hours)

[www.unh.edu/health-services](http://www.unh.edu/health-services)