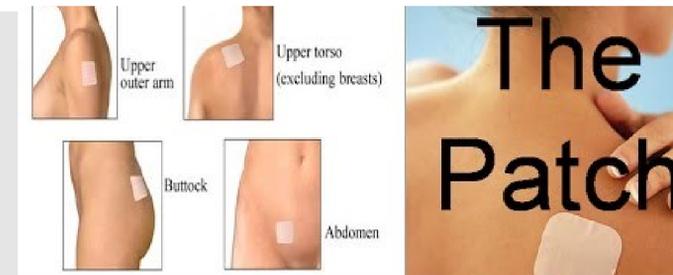


The Patch (Ortho Evra)

The hormonal patch (the patch) has two hormones (estrogen/progestin) that enter your body through your skin. It prevents pregnancy by stopping the release of an egg. It also thickens cervical mucus (liquid at the uterine opening) to stop sperm from reaching the egg



Effectiveness:

- 0.4 out of 100 women will get pregnant each year if they always use the patch the right way
- Nine out of 100 women will get pregnant each year if they don't always use the patch the right way

The patch may be worn on the lower belly, upper arm, shoulder or bottom

You can start using the patch at any time, as long as you are not pregnant.

Put a new patch each week on the same day of the week (this is the "patch change day") for three weeks in a row. Do not wear a hormonal patch on the fourth week.

ADVANTAGES: The patch works as well as the pill and is easier to use. It's small, thin and smooth and can be worn under your clothes. You only have to change the patch once a week. It sticks to your skin in warm, humid weather and when you shower, bathe, swim or exercise. Your periods may be lighter and less painful. The patch may clear up acne.

DISADVANTAGES: A small number of women have skin irritation where the patch is placed. You need to put it on the right way so it stick to your skin. The patch doesn't protect you against HIV/STDs.

You may not have any side effects from the patch. However, many women may experience:

- Sore breasts
- Headache
- Nausea
- Cramps
- Mood changes or depression

The patch releases more estrogen than birth control pills, so some women may have more side effects with the patch.

You should not use the patch if you are pregnant or:

- Have breast cancer now
- Have ever had a heart attack, stroke, or a blood clot or clotting problems
- Have liver disease or liver tumors
- Have migraine headaches with aura
- Have high blood pressure
- Have heart disease
- Smoke 15 or more cigarettes a day and are 35 or older
- Have ever had a complex organ transplant

There is a slight chance the patch may not work as well for women who weigh 198 pounds or more.

Side effects and Risks

