

Instructions for Birth Control Patch Use

The birth control patch provides no protection from the transmission of AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases (STD). If you are unsure of your partner's sexual or drug using behaviors, we strongly recommend the use of condoms every time that you have sexual intercourse.

How Birth Control Patches Work

Birth control patches used by the Shawnee County Health Agency are a combination of 2 female hormones: estrogen and progestin. The patch works by continuously transferring these hormones through your skin and into your bloodstream. These hormones keep your ovaries from releasing eggs (prevents ovulation). They also thicken the cervical mucus (making it more difficult for sperm to enter the uterus). The birth control patch is highly effective in preventing pregnancy when used correctly and a backup birth control method used when needed. DO NOT STOP using the patch unless instructed to do so by the clinic or physician.

HOW TO START & WEAR BIRTH CONTROL PATCHES

There are 2 start options: First Day Start - Apply your first patch during the first 24 hours of your menstrual period. Sunday Start - Wait until the first Sunday after your menstrual period begins. With this option, a nonhormonal backup method of birth control, such as a condom, spermicide, or diaphragm is needed for the first 7 days of the first cycle only. Every new patch should be applied on the same day of each week. This day will be your "Patch Change Day."

Be sure to have another kind of birth control ready at all times to use as a backup in case your patch seems loose or falls off.

How to use Birth Control patches

Patches use a 28-day or four-week cycle. You should apply a new patch on the same day of the week for three consecutive weeks, for a total of 21 days. You should not apply a patch during the fourth week. Your menstrual period should start during this "patch-free" week.

You should begin a new four-week cycle by applying a new patch on your Patch Change Day.

The patch may be worn on the buttocks, abdomen, upper torso (front and back, excluding the breasts), or upper outer arm.

SIDE EFFECTS

Some women using the patch experience headache, skin irritation at the application site, nausea, breast symptoms, upper respiratory illness, menstrual cramps, and abdominal cramps. Serious risks include blood clots, heart attacks and strokes, gallbladder disease, liver tumors, cancer of the reproductive organs and breasts. For more information regarding the side effects and risks with birth control patches, please read the information enclosure you receive in your patch package.

1. Skin Irritation

Redness or rash may occur at the site of application. If this occurs, the patch may be removed and a new patch may be applied to a new location until the next Change Day.

2. Vaginal Bleeding

This is bleeding (even very light bleeding) when you should not be. It is important to continue using your patches on schedule. If the bleeding occurs in more than a few cycles or lasts for more than a few days, please contact the clinic.

3. Problems Wearing Contact Lenses

If you wear contact lenses and notice a change in vision or an inability to wear your lenses, contact the clinic.

4. Fluid retention or raised blood pressure

Using the patch may cause water retention with swelling of the fingers or ankles and may raise your blood pressure. If you experience fluid retention, contact the clinic.

5. Melasma

A spotty darkening of the skin is possible, particularly of the face. This may persist after use of the patch is discontinued.

Early Patch Danger Signs

All patch users should know the “A.C.H.E.S.” of the pills. These are the signs that will alert you to the possibility of blood clots, liver tumors, gallbladder disease or high blood pressure - they require immediate attention:

- A - ABDOMINAL PAIN** - This pain is in the upper right part of the abdomen and may include nausea and vomiting.
- C - CHEST PAIN** - Sharp pain in the chest; difficult and rapid breathing; coughing up blood, crushing chest pain.
- H - HEADACHES** - Sudden severe headache, waking up with headaches. May be accompanied by blurred vision, dizziness, weakness or numbness of an arm or leg.
- E - EYE TROUBLE** - Sudden partial or complete loss of vision, flashing lights on side of eyes, double or blurred vision.
- S - SEVERE LEG PAIN** - Localized pain, warmth and swelling, red streaks in the calf.

If you have any of these symptoms **DO NOT WAIT**; call the clinic immediately at (785) 368-2116. If the clinic is not open, contact the emergency room.

General Precautions

1. Weight

If you weigh more than 198 lbs., you should use another type of birth control.

2. Missed periods

If you have used the patch correctly and miss one menstrual period, continue to use the patches for the next cycle but let the clinic know first. If you have not used the patches as instructed and missed a menstrual period, or if you missed two menstrual periods in a row, you could be pregnant. Check with the clinic immediately to determine if you are pregnant.

3. Drug Interactions

Certain drugs may interact with birth control patches to make them less effective in preventing pregnancy. Such drugs include rifampin, drugs used for epilepsy such as barbiturates (phenobarbital), anticonvulsants such as topiramate (TOPAMAX), carbamazepine (Tegretol), phenytoin (Dilantin), phenylbutazone (Butazolidin), certain drugs used in the treatment of HIV or AIDS, certain antibiotics and St. John's Wort.

For additional information regarding patch usage, please refer to the patch package insert.



**Shawnee County
Health Agency
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How to Apply the Patch

1. Always apply your patch to clean, dry skin and make sure it sticks properly.
2. Open the foil pouch by tearing it along the top edge **and** one side edge. Peel the foil pouch apart and open it flat.
3. The patch is covered by a layer of clear plastic. Remove the patch **and** the plastic together from the foil pouch.
4. Using your fingernail, lift one corner of the patch and peel the patch **and** the plastic off the foil liner.
5. Peel away half of the clear plastic. (Avoid touching the sticky surface with your fingers.)
6. Apply the sticky side of the patch on the skin you have cleaned and dried, then remove the other half of the clear plastic.
7. Press firmly on the patch with the palm of your hand for 10 seconds, making sure that the edges stick well. Run your finger around the edge of the patch to make sure it is sticking properly.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FORGET TO CHANGE YOUR PATCH

If you are more than 1 day late in putting on your first patch:

- * You **MUST** use backup contraception for 1 week
- * Apply the first patch of your new cycle as soon as you remember.
- * You will now have a new Day 1 and a new Patch Change Day

If you forget to change your patch during week 2 or 3:

- * If you are **only 1 or 2 days** late, remove the used patch and apply a new patch immediately
- * The next patch should be applied on your normal Patch Change Day
- * No backup contraception is needed
- * If it has been **more than 2 days** past your last Patch Change Day, to avoid becoming pregnant you **MUST** use backup contraception for 1 week.
- * Remove the used patch and apply a new patch as soon as you remember to start a new 4-week cycle.
- * You will now have a new Day 1 and a new Patch Change Day.

If you forget to take your patch off during week 4:

Take the patch off as soon as you remember.
Start your next cycle on your normal Patch Change Day
No backup contraception is needed

CLINIC TIMES

Monday, Thursday, Friday

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

1:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Tuesday

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

3:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Wednesday

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

2:00 pm - 4:30 pm