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NuvaRing™ **(Etonogestrel/Ethinyl Estradiol Vaginal Contraceptive Ring)**

What is NuvaRing™?

NuvaRing is a highly effective vaginal contraceptive ring that is placed into the vagina once every four weeks to prevent pregnancy. It combines estrogen and progesterone that is continuously released into the body through the mucous membranes in the vagina. At the end of the four weeks, the ring is removed for one week, at which time you should get your period.

NuvaRing prevents pregnancy the same way that birth control pills do: By suppressing the release of an egg from the ovary (ovulation) and by changing the cervical mucus, making it more difficult for sperm to enter the uterus. *NuvaRing* is 98-99% effective in preventing pregnancy if used correctly.

What are the possible side effects of NuvaRing™?

Many of the side effects of using *NuvaRing* are similar to those with birth control pills. These include breast changes (tenderness, and/or fullness), headache, nausea, mood changes, menstrual changes, increased or decreased bleeding and weight changes. Other reported side effects with *NuvaRing* may include vaginitis, foreign body sensation, vaginal discomfort and increased vaginal discharge.

What are the risks associated with using NuvaRing™?

NuvaRing contains similar hormones to those in birth control pills, and hormonal contraceptives are not for everyone. Serious risks include blood clots, heart attack and stroke. These are rare and are increased if you smoke cigarettes, especially if you are more than 35 years old. ***Women who use hormonal contraceptives are strongly advised not to smoke.*** Some women should not use *NuvaRing*, including women who have or have had blood clots, certain cancers, a history of heart attack or stroke, severe hypertension, liver tumor, complicated diabetes, and women who may be pregnant.

How do I start using NuvaRing™?

If you did not use a hormonal contraceptive in the past month, you need to start using *NuvaRing* during the first five days of your period. Counting the first day of your period as "Day 1," insert your first *NuvaRing* between Day 1 and Day 5 of your period, even if you have not finished bleeding. During the first cycle, use a back up method of birth control (such as condoms) for the first seven days of ring use.

If you are switching from a combination oral contraceptive (birth control pill) you can insert *NuvaRing* anytime during the last week of your pill pack and no later than the day when you would have started a new pill pack. You do not need to use a back up method of birth control.

If you are switching from a progestin-only birth control (mini-pill, Depo Provera or IUD)

*If you are switching from a mini-pill, start using *NuvaRing* on any day of the month. Do not skip days between your last pill and the first day of *NuvaRing* use.

*When switching from Depo Provera, start using *NuvaRing* on the day when your next injection is due.

*When switching from a progestin-containing IUD, start using *NuvaRing* on the day you have your IUD

removed.

When switching from a progestin-only contraceptive, use an extra method of birth control (such as condoms) for the first seven days of using *NuvaRing*.

Following a first trimester abortion or miscarriage, start using *NuvaRing* within five days. You do not need to use an extra method of birth control if *NuvaRing* is started within the first five days.

How do I insert *NuvaRing*TM?

Insert the *NuvaRing* as if it were a tampon. Fold the ring between the thumb and index finger and gently push the ring into the vagina. The exact position of *NuvaRing* in the vagina is not important for it to work. Most women do not feel it once it is in place. If you feel discomfort, *NuvaRing* is probably not inserted far enough into the vagina. Using your finger, gently push the ring further into the vagina. There is no danger of pushing the ring “too far” or having it get lost. The cervix will block it from going into the uterus. Once the ring is inserted, keep it in place for four weeks in a row.

How do I remove *NuvaRing*TM?

You will need to remove the ring four weeks after insertion, about the same time and same day of the week as it was inserted. You can remove *NuvaRing* by hooking your index finger under the forward rim or by holding the rim between the index and middle fingers and pulling it out.

Your menstrual period will usually start two to three days after the ring is removed and may not have finished before the next ring is due to be inserted. For continued pregnancy protection, you must insert the new ring one week after the last one was removed, even if you are still bleeding.

What happens if *NuvaRing*TM slips out?

Rarely, *NuvaRing* can slip out of the vagina. This could happen when you’re removing a tampon or straining your muscles during a bowel movement. If the ring is out for **less** than three hours, you should still be protected from pregnancy. Just rinse the ring off with cool water and reinsert. If the ring has been out for **more** than three hours, you may not be adequately protected against pregnancy. The ring should be rinsed with cool water and reinserted as soon as possible. You must use an additional method of birth control (such as condoms) until the reinserted ring has been in place for seven days in a row.

If you lose a ring, you must insert a new ring and remain on the same schedule you would have followed if you were still using the lost ring.

What should I do if I keep a ring in for too long?

If *NuvaRing* has been left in your vagina for up to one additional week, remove it and insert a new ring after a one-week, ring-free break. If *NuvaRing* has been left in place for more than five weeks, you may not be protected against pregnancy and you must check to be sure you are not pregnant. If you are not pregnant, insert a new ring and use a back up method of birth control until the ring has been in place for seven full days.

What happens if I miss a period on *NuvaRing*TM?

As with all hormonal methods of contraception, it is not uncommon to miss a period while using *NuvaRing*. Be sure to check for pregnancy if:

- *You miss a period and the ring was out of your vagina for more than three consecutive hours
- *You miss a period and you had waited longer than one week to insert a new ring
- *You have left *NuvaRing* in place for longer than five weeks

If you miss two periods in a row and have followed the instructions correctly for using *NuvaRing*, be sure to check for pregnancy.

If you know or suspect that you may be pregnant, Do not use *NuvaRing*.