



Birth Control: Vaginal Ring

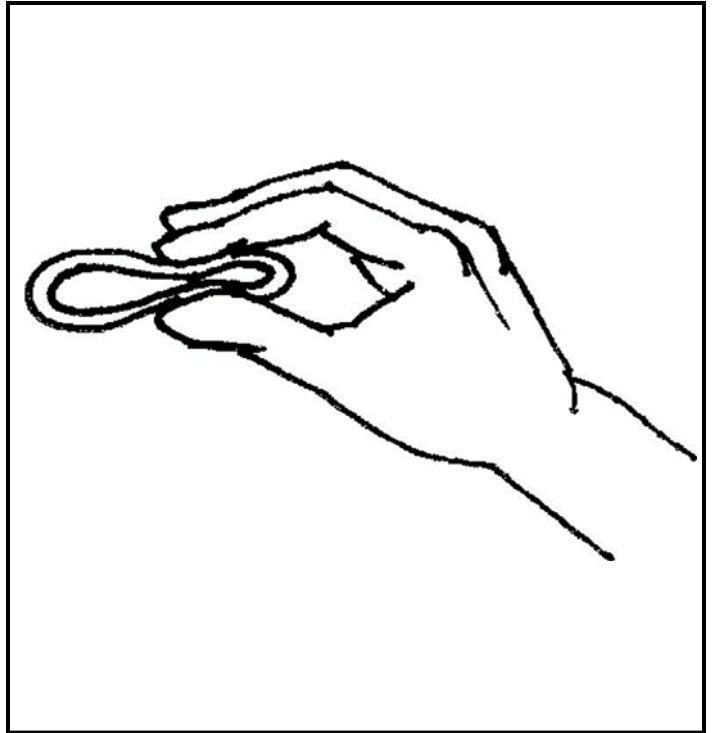
What is the vaginal ring?

The vaginal ring is a hormonal contraceptive that is placed inside the vagina. There are two types of vaginal rings available:

Etonogestrel/ethinyl estradiol vaginal ring (NuvaRing, EluRyng): The ring is placed inside the vagina for 3 weeks and then removed and thrown away. After 1 week, a new ring is placed inside the vagina for another 3 weeks.

Segesterone acetate/ethinyl estradiol vaginal ring (Annovera): The ring is placed inside the vagina for 3 weeks, removed and stored in a case for 1 week, and then placed back inside the vagina for 3 weeks. It can be used for 13 cycles and then a new ring is needed.

The rings contain similar hormones as a birth control pill and work the same way by releasing hormones. These hormones stop your body from releasing eggs and change the lining of your uterus, preventing pregnancy. These hormones change the mucus in your cervix to block sperm. It is prescribed by a health care provider.



How do I use the ring?

Using the ring is similar to using a tampon. Place the ring into your vagina by pinching it into an oval and then placing into your vagina as far back as possible. Leave it in for 3 weeks. Then remove it for a week to have your period. You can remove the ring by inserting one finger into your vagina and hooking the end of the ring to pull it out. Then either put in a new ring or the same ring depending on the type you are using. The ring can be used to stop periods completely. If you are interested in doing this, you should speak to your healthcare provider. The monthly ring refills will need to be stored in the refrigerator.

How well does the ring work?

About 8-9 out of 100 users will become pregnant each year if they don't always use the ring perfectly. Less than 1 out of 100 users will become pregnant each year if they always use the ring perfectly.

How do I make the ring work the best?

Keep it in place. Change it on time. Don't leave it out for more than 3 hours at a time for the monthly ring or 2 hours for the yearly ring in the first 21 days of a cycle.

What are pros to using the ring?

The ring is good for pregnancy prevention. You can leave the ring in the vagina during sex; most people don't feel the ring.

You don't have to remember a daily pill.

Periods are usually more regular, lighter and shorter. Talk to your provider if you would like to have periods less often with the ring.

The ring can help with acne, cramps and premenstrual syndrome.

What are cons to using the ring?

The ring doesn't protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), so you still need to use a condom.

Side effects are uncommon, but can include headaches, nausea and breast tenderness.

There is a risk of forming a blood clot in your leg (deep vein thrombosis) or in your lung (pulmonary embolus). The risk of blood clots is very low, but you should discuss this with your healthcare provider.

Talk to your provider if you take other medications, smoke, have a history of blood clots, high blood pressure, migraine headaches or other medical problems.

Some people will experience increased vaginal discharge.