

Combined Hormonal Contraceptive (pill, patch, vaginal ring) Information Sheet

Combined hormonal contraceptives, birth control methods that contain synthetic versions of the hormones estrogen and progesterone, are used to prevent pregnancy. Combined hormonal contraceptive methods include oral contraceptive pills, contraceptive patches (Xulane Patch), and vaginal rings (NuvaRing or Annovera). With typical use, these methods are about 91% effective at preventing pregnancy. With perfect use (using the method exactly as directed), this method of birth control is 99% effective. These methods typically start protecting the user from pregnancy after 7 days of use. If at any point you stop using your birth control method, you will no longer be protected from pregnancy.

Do NOT use these contraceptive methods if you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant, if you have migraines accompanied by visual disturbances (aura) such as seeing spots or blurs, have uncontrolled high blood pressure, are a smoker over the age of 35, if you have a serious liver disease or liver growths, known or suspected breast cancer, recent blood clot(s) in your legs, lungs, or eyes, or if you are allergic to any of the ingredients.

How to use:

- **Pills:** take one pill a day, around the same time every day.
- **Patch:** place patch on clean, dry skin located on upper body (NOT chest or breasts), change every 7 days for 3 weeks. Leave off for 1 week (after 3 weeks of use). Repeat this process.
- **Ring:** insert ring into vagina so that it fits comfortably. Leave in place for 3 weeks. After 3 weeks, take the ring out for 1 week. Repeat this process with new ring (Nuvaring) or same ring (Annovera only).

Benefits:

- Vaginal bleeding may be more regular, lighter, and shorter as a result of using combined hormonal contraceptives.
- Clearer skin is a common benefit of taking combined hormonal contraceptives.
- These methods do not impact future fertility. You can get pregnant as soon as you stop use.

Risks:

- Vaginal bleeding between periods, nausea, and breast tenderness are all common side effects that often go away after using your method for 2-3 months Other side effects could include but are not limited to: mood changes, acne or other skin changes, headaches, weight gain, high blood pressure, liver problems. It is important to read the information given to you with the medication.
- Rarely, serious health risks can occur including blood clot, stroke, and heart attack. These are serious events that can be life threatening.

If you experience any of the following rare symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider immediately:

- Leg pain, swelling, and redness
- Vision changes including blurry vision, double vision, or loss of vision.
- Chest pain
- Severe headaches
- Weakness/numbness on one side of the body
- Yellowing of skin or eyes