



The ring is a method of hormonal birth control in the form of a flexible plastic ring that is inserted into the vagina, where it stays in for 3 weeks and out for one week. There are 2 birth control rings: NuvaRing and the new Annovera. The ring does NOT protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

## How does it work?

Hormones are slowly released from the ring and absorbed into the body through the vaginal lining. Estrogen and progestin work together to prevent pregnancy by preventing the release of an egg.

## How well does it work?

The ring is 99% effective in preventing pregnancy with perfect use and 91% effective with typical use.

## When does it start working?

If you insert the ring within the first 5 days of your period, it will get to work right away. Otherwise you will need to use backup birth control, like condoms, for at least 7 days.

## How are NuvaRing and Annovera different?

NuvaRing is thrown away after each use, while Annovera is reusable for an entire year (13 cycles). Because Annovera is reusable, it is important to keep it clean. Before and after each use, wash it with mild soap and water and pat it dry. During the ring-free days, keep it in its storage case away from extreme temperatures. For both rings, avoid using oil-based lubricants.

## How do I use it?

1. Wash your hands. Pinch the sides of the ring and insert it into the vagina. (Applicators are available for easier insertion of NuvaRing.) The ring does not need to be in a specific position as long as you are comfortable and it doesn't feel like it will slip out. It is normal to not feel it once it's in place. Leave it in for 3 weeks.
2. After the 3 weeks, wash your hands and remove the ring. Hook a finger under the rim of the ring and pull it out. Place it into the resealable foil pouch that it came in and throw it away. Next, you will have 7 ring-free days. You can expect your period during this time.
3. After those 7 days, repeat the cycle with a new ring. It is okay to insert the new ring if you are still on your period. You can use tampons and have sex with the ring in.

## What if I forget to change NuvaRing on time?

The NuvaRing has enough hormones to effectively prevent pregnancy for 4 weeks. If you have left it in for longer than 4 weeks, verify that you are not pregnant and insert a new ring, skipping the ring-free week. Use a backup method of birth control for the next 7 days.

## What if I forget to change Annovera on time?

If Annovera is left in for more than 21 days, remove it for a total of 7 days and then reinsert it to get back on schedule for 21 days. Use a backup method of birth control for the next 7 days. Consider using emergency contraception if you had sex during the time the ring was out of hormones.

## Is it right for me?

The ring is an effective, convenient, pill-free option that is safe for many people. Both rings are latex-free and safe for those with a latex allergy. Some health conditions (history of blood clots, high blood pressure, stroke, heart attack, migraine, smoking, and age over 35) make it unsafe to use the ring, so other methods (without estrogen) can be used instead. Another important factor is comfort with using a vaginal product.

## What if I want to get pregnant soon?

You can get pregnant as soon as you stop using the ring.

## What are some side effects I might experience?

When starting the ring, you may experience nausea, headache, breast tenderness, or changes in weight, mood, sex drive, or bleeding. Typically, these resolve within 3 months. You may notice more vaginal discharge, which is harmless. If you have vaginal irritation or discharge that is clumpy, smelly, and colored, see your doctor as these can be signs of an infection.

## When should I call my doctor?

Rare but serious side effects can occur with the ring, such as blood clots and strokes. If you experience sudden and/or severe pain in your stomach, chest, head, or legs with or without dizziness, nausea, vomiting, difficulty breathing, or changes in vision or mental status, call your health care provider right away and/or get to an emergency room.

## Where can I find a reproductive health clinic?

Family Planning Clinic Locator  
[www.reproductivehealthservices.gov](http://www.reproductivehealthservices.gov)

Planned Parenthood  
[www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center)

CDC HIV/STD Testing Directory  
[www.gettested.cdc.gov](http://www.gettested.cdc.gov)



Birth Control  
Pharmacies



birth control  
pharmacist