



## Using the Nuva Ring

### How Does the Nuva Ring Work?

The Nuva Ring is a small flexible ring that is inserted into the vagina once a month. It contains the same hormones as in the birth control pill, estrogen and progestin. The hormones in the Nuva Ring work to prevent pregnancy by “taking over” the hormones in your body. They prevent the ovary from releasing an egg and thicken the mucous at the entrance of the uterus, blocking sperm from getting in.

### How to Use the Nuva Ring

- You can start the ring in one of these three ways, your health care provider will decide which is best for you:
  - **Start your ring the first Sunday after your next period begins, or the first day of your period if your menses begin on a Sunday.**
  - **Start your ring on the first day of your next period.**
  - **Start your ring on the day you are in the doctor’s office.**
- Follow the package insert for directions on insertion and removal of the ring.
- The day you insert the first ring becomes your “**ring change day**”.
- Remove it in 3 weeks on the same day of the week that it was inserted (your **ring change day**).
- After 1 week without the ring, insert a new one – on the same day of the week that the previous one was inserted in your last cycle (your **ring change day**).
- During the 1 week break, you will usually have your period. You may still be bleeding when it is time to insert a new ring. This is normal. The vaginal ring must be inserted on the same day of the week as it was inserted in the last cycle, or you could get pregnant.
- You do not need to take the ring out during sexual intercourse.
- ***You must always continue to use a condom. The Nuva Ring does NOT protect against sexually transmitted diseases including HIV (AIDS).***
- Antibiotics and other medications may decrease the effectiveness of the ring, giving an increased risk of pregnancy or a heavier menses that month. Again, be sure to use a condom!

### What if You Make a Mistake?

- ***If the ring comes out***, replace the ring as soon as possible. If the ring has been out for more than 3 hours, use condoms for 1 full week (7 days).
- ***If you leave the ring in for more than 3 weeks but less than 4 weeks***, remove the ring for one week, then replace the ring. Use condoms for 7 days to prevent pregnancy.
- ***If you leave the ring in for more than 4 weeks***, remove the ring. You can replace the ring right away. If you have had intercourse during this time, you could be pregnant. You must use condoms for birth control for 7 days.

### **Call Your Doctor Right Away if You Have**

- **A**bdominal pain (severe)
- **C**hest pain (severe)/shortness of breath
- **H**eadaches (severe)
- **E**ye problems – blurred vision or loss of vision
- **S**evere leg pain (calf or thigh)

Women using the Nuva Ring have a small increased risk for getting a blood clot in the leg or lung. This risk is very low: about 1 in 15,000 women. If you smoke, this risk increases.

### **Common Side Effects**

Occasionally women starting the Nuva Ring will have nausea, breast tenderness, headaches or mood changes. If this happens, it is usually mild and does not last long. The Nuva Ring **does not** cause weight gain.