

The patch does not protect against sexually transmitted infections. Use condoms every time you have sex.

- Never run out of patches. You can always call the clinic and ask for a refill.
- Never use someone else's patches or share your patch with anyone else.
- If you are having a problem, don't just stop using the patch. Call the clinic.
- The Ortho Evra Patch is the only birth control patch available at this time. If you feel miserable while using this method, discuss other methods of birth control with your doctor.

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### Clinic locations

#### Children's – Minneapolis

#### Children's Specialty Center

2530 Chicago Avenue South  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

#### Children's – St. Paul

#### Garden View Medical Building

345 North Smith Avenue  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

#### Children's – Minnetonka

6060 Clearwater Drive  
Minnetonka, MN 55343

#### Children's Clinics – Woodwinds

Woodwinds Oak Center  
1825 Woodwinds Drive, suite 400  
For directions, please visit [childrensMN.org](http://childrensMN.org).

### Contact us

For more information about the Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology Program, call 651-220-5999 from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.



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### Pediatric and adolescent gynecology

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### For medical professionals

For referrals or assistance 24 hours a day, call Children's Physician Access at 612-343-2121, Twin Cities Metro, or toll-free 866-755-2121.



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# Using the Patch

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Pediatric and Adolescent  
Gynecology Program  
651-220-5999



## How does the patch work?

When you are not using birth control, estrogen and progesterone are released from your ovaries. When the patch is applied to your skin, the estrogen and progesterone move from the adhesive on the patch, through your skin and into your body. Your body then knows that estrogen and progesterone are coming from somewhere else (from the patch), so your ovaries don't need to release hormones; they "take a little nap." While the ovaries are "napping," they don't release hormones, and don't cause the release of an egg, which is how the patch works for birth control.

Forgetting to replace the patch on time can cause the ovaries to "wake up." When that happens, the ovaries release hormones and may release an egg, which can cause pregnancy or irregular bleeding.

## How do I use the patch?

Apply your first patch as directed.

- The day you apply the 1st patch is your "patch change day." After applying the first patch, replace the patch once every week for 3 weeks on the patch change day.
- On the fourth week you will not wear a patch. This is the "patch free week." You should start bleeding this week. Most people start bleeding on the second or third day of this week.

- After 7 days off the patch, apply another patch on your "patch change day." You might or might not still be bleeding; it doesn't matter either way. You will again be using the patch for 3 weeks and then 1 week off the patch.
- If you are using the patch as an extended cycle, your doctor will tell you when to expect bleeding.

## What if I forget to change a patch?

- If an edge or corner of the patch becomes loose, try to press it down again.
- If the patch comes off and you are sure it has been off for less than 24 hours, apply a new patch. Stay on the same schedule with your patches and keep the same patch change day.
- If the patch comes off and you have no idea when it came off, apply a new patch and start a new cycle. (This becomes patch #1 and this is your new patch change day.)
- If you forget to replace a patch, your ovaries may "wake up." Be sure to use condoms during intercourse to prevent pregnancy; start a new patch cycle.
- If you have questions about what to do, call the clinic.

## Are there side effects to the patch?

Most people don't have any side effects with the patch. However, during the first 3 months you may experience:

- Bleeding or spotting when the patch is on. This is called breakthrough bleeding and usually happens more during month 1, less during month 2, and by month 3 most people have regular periods during the patch free week. If breakthrough bleeding continues after month 3, you may need a different method.
- Note the dates of any bleeding that you have on a calendar. Bring the calendar to each visit with your doctor.
- Other problems are not common, but you may have nausea, breast tenderness, headaches, or mood changes. If this happens, it is usually mild and doesn't last long.
- If you are having problems that are making you feel miserable, call the clinic, **do not stop using the patch.**
- The patch does **not** cause weight gain.

## Danger signs of using the patch

Call the office immediately if you have

- Dizziness
- Vision changes

Consider immediate evaluation if you experience the following:

- Severe headaches (the worst headache you've ever had)
- Chest pain
- Pain in the calf of one leg