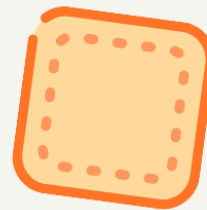


# The Birth Control Patch



## What is the birth control patch?

The birth control patch, also known as the Contraceptive patch, by its brand name EVRA patch, or even just “the patch”, is a hormonal method of contraceptive. It is a small beige square adhesive patch that is worn on the body by a person with a uterus. The patch contains two hormones, estrogen and progestin, that are slowly released in to the body to prevent pregnancy.



## How does it work?

The hormones in the patch (estrogen and progestin) are released through your skin in to your bloodstream. They prevent your ovaries from releasing an ovum (egg cell) each month, make the cervical mucus thicker (making it harder for sperm to get into the cervix), and change the lining of the uterus so it is harder for a fertilized egg to implant or grow.



## How do I use the birth control patch?

- You will need to wear a new patch every week for 3 consecutive weeks on either the buttocks, abdomen, upper body (excluding breasts), or upper outer arm. You should wear it in a different place each week and change the patch on the same day of the week. During the 4th week, you do not wear a patch. You will get your period at this time. After the patch-free week, you apply a new patch and begin a new cycle.
- You can wear the patch while swimming, doing exercise, taking a shower or bath, and during hot and humid weather.



## Where can I get the birth control patch? What is the cost?

The birth control patch requires a prescription from a doctor and can be filled at the pharmacy. The patch costs \$35-\$45 a month (for 3 patches) at most pharmacies. It is covered by most insurance.



## Are there any side effects?

- You may feel some minor side effects, including irregular bleeding or spotting, headaches, breast discomfort, cramping, nausea, and skin irritation where the patch touches the skin.
- Ask your health care provider about the patch, as it may not be the best option for you if you smoke, are breastfeeding, weigh more than 198 pounds, have a family history of breast cancer, or have had heart disease, serious liver disease, diabetes, blood clots, or high blood pressure.



## How effective is the birth control patch?

With perfect use, the patch is 99.7% effective in preventing pregnancy. Based on average use, the patch is 92% effective. It does NOT offer any protection against sexually transmitted infections or HIV.

Sexual Health Resource Centre  
Student Union Building Room 509



SHRC.ASU@acadiau.ca  
@SHRCAcadia