

## The Birth Control Patch

If you don't like wearing a contraceptive or taking it orally, you can slap it to your skin because there are birth control patches available in the market.

The birth control patch is a thin, beige colored, four and a half centimeter square patch that is applied to the skin. Each patch contains hormones that release chemicals into your bloodstream.

The chemicals found in the patch are progesterone and estrogen that are designed to prevent ovulation which is the release of an egg from the ovaries during a female's monthly cycle. When this happens, a girl can have intercourse without the risk of getting pregnant.

The birth control patch also does something else and it thickens the mucus that is produced in the cervix making it difficult for the sperm to ever reach the eggs. Sometimes, the hormones themselves may affect the lining of the uterus so if ever the egg is fertilized, it will have a difficult time attaching itself to the walls of the uterus.

Proper usage of the birth control patch is done based on her monthly menstrual cycle. This will be applied to the skin for 3 weeks in a row and then on the fourth week, she remains patch free so she can have her monthly period.

The patch should be applied to one in four areas of the body namely the abdomen, buttocks, upper arm or torso. The trick is making sure that the patch is placed on the same day each week because this is the only way to make sure that it is effective.

So, if you decide to put on a patch on a Tuesday, this should be replaced on Tuesday the following week. Once you remove the old one, put the new one close to the previous area as this avoids skin irritation. Do not apply the new patch if the skin has a cut, is color red or irritated.

First time users of birth control patches are advised to use an additional form of contraception during the first 7 days of use. This is a failsafe in the event that the birth control patch falls off.

Birth control patches are waterproof and sweat proof so you can continue doing your daily routine. You must never apply soap and other skin products because this may affect its ability to stick on your skin.

Because the birth control patch releases chemicals into the bloodstream, you may

experience some side effects. This includes abdominal pain, breast tenderness, fluid retention or raised blood pressure, irregular bleeding, headaches, menstrual cramps and nausea.

Not all women may also use birth control patches. If you are 35 years of age, suffer from blood clots, chest pain, diabetes, high blood pressure, headaches, known or suspected tumor, hepatitis, heart diseases and allergic to patches, it is advised that you find another birth control method.

Some drugs may also complicate the effectiveness of the birth control patch. These include certain antibiotics that are used to treat seizures, migraines and tuberculosis. When you speak to your doctor about birth control methods, it is best to undergo a physical examination and reveal to him or her any other relevant information about your medical condition.

Birth control patches are easy to use. You just have to put it in the same area each week and best of all, it doesn't cause any interruptions when you are having sex.