



## What to know when using the ring as birth control

- It takes 7 days for the ring to be effective in preventing pregnancy. Be sure to use a second method of birth control such as condoms during that time.
- The ring is safe to wear during sex.
- If you take the ring out for any reason, make sure to put it back in within 1-2 hours.
- Avoid using oil-based lubricants or vaginal anti-yeast creams. They can change the way the medicine in the ring is released.
- The ring doesn't prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Use condoms and get tested at least once a year.



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## PEDIATRIC AND ADOLESCENT GYNECOLOGY

### The Ring

*The ring is one treatment option for problematic periods. It can help with heavy, irregular or painful bleeding and with preventing acne. The ring sits in the vagina and releases medicine into the blood that thins the lining of the uterus and stops ovulation. For many, using the ring is easier than taking a pill every day and safe for most people.*



There are 2 types of rings: **monthly** and **yearly**.

- **Monthly** rings are changed every month.
- **Yearly** rings are changed once a year.

### Getting started

- Start your ring as soon as you get it from the pharmacy. Write down your start date in a calendar or diary.

### How do I put in the ring?

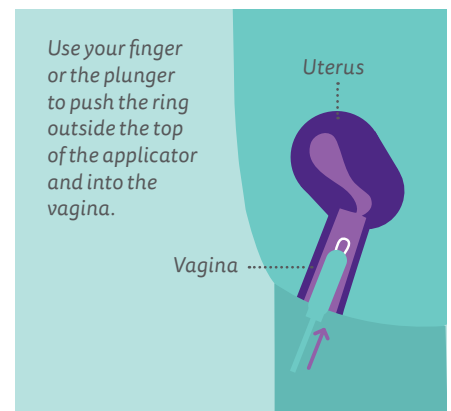
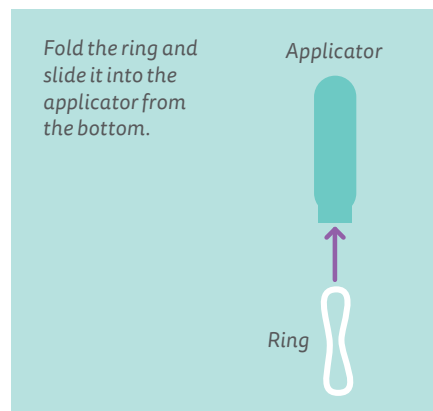
- Find a comfortable position such as squatting, laying down or standing with one leg on the toilet or on a step stool.
- Use your thumb and finger to squeeze the ring into an oval shape.
- Push the ring into the vagina. Once it's inside, push the ring up as high as you can.
- If it feels uncomfortable, it needs to be pushed up higher. There is no correct position for the ring once it's all the way in. You won't be able to feel it once it's there.



## What if I am having a hard time putting in the ring?

If you are having trouble putting the ring in, you can slide the ring inside an empty tampon applicator.

- Start with a super-sized tampon that has a curved plastic applicator and take out the tampon and the plunger.
- Fold the ring and slide it into the applicator from the bottom. You can now put the plunger back in if needed.
- Slide the applicator (with the ring inside) into the vagina.
- Use your finger or the plunger to push the ring outside the top of the applicator and into the vagina.



## How do I remove the ring?

- When it's time to take the ring out, put your finger into the vagina and hook it around the ring.
- Pull down on the ring and slide it out.
  - **Monthly** rings (NuvaRing®) should be wrapped in tissue and thrown away
  - **Yearly** rings (Annovera®) should be washed with soap and water, dried and stored until the next time.
- You will take out the ring when you decide to have a period. This can be once a month, every 3 months or if you're having breakthrough bleeding.

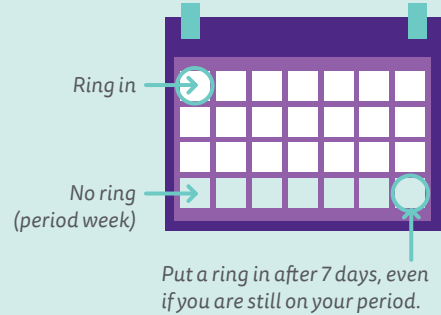


When it is time to remove the ring, put your index finger into the vagina and hook the ring with your finger. Pull down on the ring and slide it out.

# Periods

## Having a period every month:

- For monthly periods, leave the ring (NuvaRing®) in for 21 days, and then remove for 7 days. This is when you will have a period.
- Insert a new monthly ring or re-insert the 12-month ring (Annovera®) after 7 days.
- You can insert the ring during your period and use tampons while the ring is in.



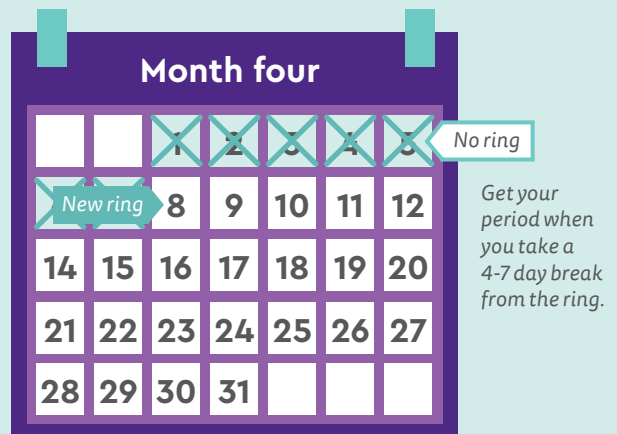
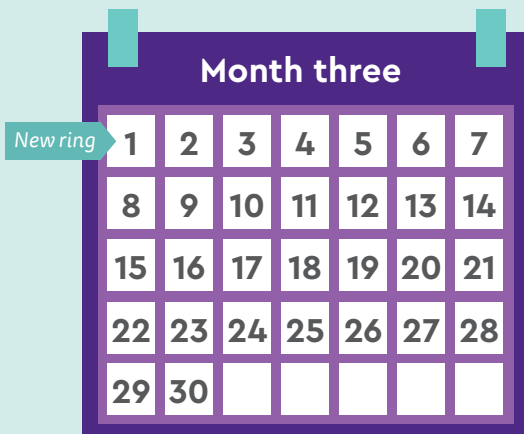
## Having a period every 3 months:

For the **monthly** ring (NuvaRing®):

- Insert the NuvaRing® and note the day of the month. Insert a new ring in 4 weeks on that same day. (ex. Insert on a Tuesday, replace on a Tuesday).
- After replacing the ring two times, leave the ring out for 4-7 days. This is when you'll have a period.
- You can insert the ring during your period and use tampons while the ring is in.

For the **yearly** ring (Annovera®):

- Put the ring in and note the day of the month. Remove the ring 3 months later, on the same day (ex. put in on a Tuesday, take out on a Tuesday). Wash with mild soap and water, pat dry and store until next time.
- Leave the ring out for 4-7 days. This is when you'll have a period.
- You can reinsert Annovera® during your period and use tampons while the ring is in.



## No periods (continuous dosing)

For the **monthly** ring (NuvaRing®):

- Insert the ring and note the day of the month. Insert a new ring in 4 weeks on that same day. (ex. Insert on a Tuesday, replace on a Tuesday).

For the **yearly** ring (Annovera®):

- Insert the ring and note the day of the month. Take the ring out every 3 months and wash with mild soap and water and immediately put it back in.
- If you have bleeding while the ring is in, take it out for 4-7 days and start over.

## Side effects

- Most users of the ring have no side effects. However, some people might notice these symptoms:
  - A change in their vaginal discharge
  - Mild stomach upset
  - Mild headache
  - Breast tenderness
- Let our clinic know if these are issues for you, or they last for more than 2 weeks.
- The ring shouldn't cause depression or weight gain.
- The ring can slightly increase the risk of blood clots (called a venous thrombosis or deep venous thrombosis).  
**People with a history of or risk factors for blood clots shouldn't use the combined pill, patch and ring, and instead use progestin-only treatments to help with periods or for contraception.**

## Storage

Your ring should be stored in a cool, dry place. This can include in the refrigerator. Avoid extreme temperatures.

- **Monthly** rings (NuvaRing®) can be stored for 3 months.
- **Yearly** rings (Annovera®) can be stored in their case when not in use.
  - Note that the Annovera® ring may become slightly darker in color over time. This is not a problem.

## What if the ring falls out or comes out?

The ring shouldn't fall out. If it does, wash it with mild soap and water, then place it back inside the vagina. Don't leave it out for more than 2 hours unless you are taking your normal break for 4-7 days.

## What if I forget to change the ring?

- The **monthly** ring has 5 weeks of medicine inside. If it has been 5 weeks or less since you have placed the ring, take the ring out and do a 7-day break for monthly periods, or put in a new ring for no periods (continuous dosing).
- The **yearly** ring has 1 year of medicine inside. If you are late to remove the ring, replace and continue to use as planned from that time on.

## Learn more



[childrenscolorado.org/Gyn](https://childrenscolorado.org/Gyn)



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