



## Your Guide to Birth Control: The Patch

The patch is used to prevent pregnancy. In order for the patch to prevent pregnancy, you must follow the instructions and change your patch on time.

### How the Patch Works:

Two hormones, estrogen and progesterin, are in the patch and absorbed through your skin. They prevent pregnancy by thickening the mucus in the cervix which prevents the sperm from travelling into the uterus. They also thin the lining of the uterus, which makes it difficult for a fertilized egg to attach to the uterus. Lastly, they stop the ovaries from releasing an egg each month (ovulation).

### What to do During the Month:

Apply the patch to the buttock, abdomen, upper arm, or upper torso and replace the patch once per week. You will replace the patch three weeks in a row, then wear no patch for the fourth week. Set an alarm on your phone or make note on a calendar to help you remember your “change day”. \*It’s important to keep wearing the patch even if you’re having spotting or bleeding or if you have nausea. Talk with your provider if these side effects are concerning you.

### What to do if You Miss Your Change Day:

- Your Change Day is the day that you put on a new patch, whether it’s the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> patch for the month. Your change day should be the same always. After three weeks of wearing a patch, you will wear no patch for the 4<sup>th</sup> week, and this is the week you should get your period.

- Delay in beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> patch in the cycle:

-Put the patch on when you remember. The day you put it on becomes your new change day.

\* You could become pregnant if you have sex within 7 days after you put the patch back on, so use a backup method.

- Delay in beginning the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> patch in the cycle:

- If it’s <48 hrs of when the patch should’ve been changed just replace the patch and keep your regular change day.

- If >48 hrs, put on a new patch and this becomes your new change day.  
\* If you are <48 hrs late, you are not at risk for pregnancy. If >48hrs late, use a backup method for 7 days.

- Delay in removing the 3<sup>rd</sup> patch in a cycle:

- Remove the patch when you remember, and keep your regular change day.

- Detached Patch:

- If partially/completely detached for <24 hrs, stick it back on or replace it if it lost stickiness. Do not use tape to keep it on.

-If detached >24 hrs, apply a new patch and use back up for 7 days.

If you get confused (CAUSE LET’S BE HONEST, THIS IS A LOT) just to be sure to use a back-up method (condoms) and you can call us or email your provider about what to do.