The NuvaRing is a vaginal ring containing the two hormones, estrogen and progestin which are released in low doses continuously. These hormones help to prevent pregnancy by:

- inhibiting ovulation
- producing thicker cervical secretion which acts as a physical barrier to sperm

**How well does the NuvaRing work?**

- Only 1-2 women in 100 will become pregnant if the NuvaRing is used correctly and consistently or 98 – 99% effective.

**Other Medications and the NuvaRing**

The following medications and supplements may interfere with the effectiveness of the NuvaRing. We recommend that women using these medications use another birth control method while on these medications and for 7 days after completing them:

- Anticonvulsants; St. John’s Wort; Provigil

**Benefits of the NuvaRing**

- reduced risk of ovarian cancer
- reduced risk of uterine cancer
- menstrual regularity
- less anemia
- lighter periods
- fewer ovarian cysts
- less painful periods
- improvement in acne
- fewer ectopic pregnancies
- reduction in PMS

**NuvaRing Risks**

There is a slight increased risk of developing blood clots when using the NuvaRing. When blood clots occur, they usually first develop in a lower leg and are a potentially life threatening side effect which can lead to heart attack, stroke or lung complications. However, only 1.2 to 2 women in 10,000 that use NuvaRing will develop a blood clot.

If you experience any of these symptoms, see your clinician, return to the clinic or go to the nearest Emergency Room immediately. Do not wait for these symptoms to get better.

- severe abdominal pain
- shortness of breath or chest pain
- severe and sudden headache
- sudden eyesight problems
- pain or swelling in calf, thigh or groin

Additional side effects from the NuvaRing are not life threatening, but may be serious:

- high blood pressure
- gallbladder disease

**NuvaRing Side Effects**

Minor side effects of the NuvaRing that could occur:

- mood changes
- vaginal irritation
- breast tenderness
- nausea
- increased vaginal secretion
- headaches

**How to use the NuvaRing**

There are two methods for using the NuvaRing:

1. Insert the NuvaRing in the vagina and keep it in place for 3 weeks in a row. Remove the ring for 7 days. This is the week you will have your period. Replace with a new ring in 1 week. You will always replace and remove your NuvaRing on the same day of the week (e.g. Sunday).
2. Insert the NuvaRing in the vagina the 1st day of every month. Remove the ring on the 25th of every month. You will have your period a few days after removal.

You can have intercourse and use tampons with the NuvaRing in place.
First time users:
1. **Start with your period:** On day 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 of your period, insert the NuvaRing even if you have vaginal bleeding. You should use a back up birth control method for the first 7 days after inserting the ring.
2. **Today Start:** Insert your NuvaRing today if you have not had unprotected intercourse since your last period. Use a back up birth control method for 7 days.

**Switching From the Pill or the Patch**
Insert the NuvaRing anytime during the placebo week of Pills or during the “patch free” week. No back-up birth control method is needed.

**If the NuvaRing slips out**
Sometimes the NuvaRing slips out of the vagina while removing a tampon or during intercourse. If the ring has been out for less than three hours in a 24 hour period, you should still have birth control protection. Replace the NuvaRing as soon as possible; if needed, the ring can be rinsed with cool water.
If the NuvaRing has been out for more than 3 hours in a 24 hour period, replace the NuvaRing as soon as possible and use another birth control method for 7 days.

**If the NuvaRing is in your vagina for too long**
- If you have left the NuvaRing in place for an extra week or less (28 days or less) you will still be protected from pregnancy.
- If you have left the NuvaRing in place for more than 4 weeks consider emergency contraception (Plan B) if you have had unprotected intercourse. Insert a new NuvaRing and use another birth control method until the new Ring has been in place for 7 consecutive days.

In an emergency go to Mount Nittany Medical Center or call 911 for an ambulance.

**Test Results and Advice Nurse**
Send secure message to advice nurse via the UHS website or call 814-863-4463.

**Appointments**
Appointments can be made online via the UHS website, by phone 814-863-0774, or in person. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please call or go online to cancel. Otherwise you will be charged for the visit.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. This information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.