

# Vaginal Ring

## What is it and what is it for?

It is a flexible plastic ring that you wear inside your vagina continuously for 21 days a month. It steadily releases hormones (estrogen y progesterin). It prevents you from getting pregnant and regulates the menstrual cycle.

## What is it not for?

It does not protect you from catching sexually transmitted diseases and it is not a method of abortion or of interrupting pregnancy. It does not stop you from getting pregnant if you put it in after having unprotected sex.

## What side effects does it have?

For the first 3 months, your periods may be irregular. You may experience liquid retention, weight gain, headaches, mood swings or irritability, and stomach upsets. Although it is unusual, it can make your blood thicker and encourage the appearance of blood clots in the veins (thrombosis), as is the case with all hormonal methods of contraception. This is more frequent in patients who are smokers or whose legs have been immobilized due to long-distance journeys, wearing bandages or plaster, etc.

Occasionally it may cause discomfort during sex.

## Can anyone use it?

If you have a disease that affects your blood circulation (thrombosis, lupus, high blood pressure, diabetes) or a liver disease, or you have a history of hormone-sensitive cancer, you should talk to your doctor first.

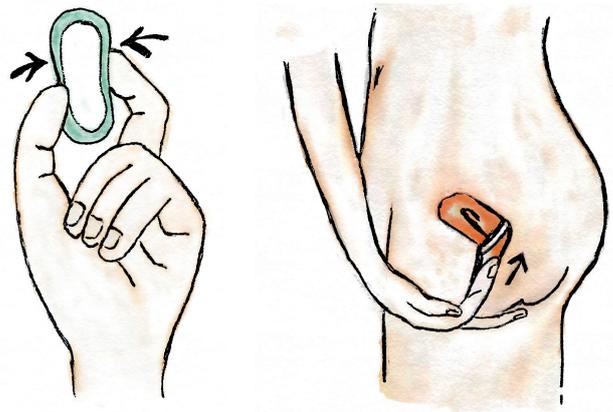
## How do you put it in?

Squeeze the ring between your thumb and finger and gently insert the tip in your vagina, like a tampon. Gently push the ring up into your vagina as far as you can. It will open out and sit inside your vagina.

## When can you start to use it?

The first time you should insert it on the first day of your period. It starts to be effective after 7 days.

You leave it in for 3 weeks (21 days). Then you take it out (and take a break for a week) and your period will come. After the week's break, even if you still have your period, you insert another ring. You should always try to insert it at the same time of day (morning, afternoon or night).



## What happens if it comes out or if I am late changing it?

If you have been without the ring for under 3 hours, you can wash it with cold or warm water and put it back in.

If more than 3 hours have elapsed, you can wash it and put it back in, but you will need to use condoms for the next 7 days.

## What happens if I forget to take it out?

It becomes less effective as a method of contraception and you run the risk of getting pregnant.

If under 7 days have elapsed, you should take out the ring, rest for 7 full days and then start a new cycle.

If more than 7 days have elapsed, you should change the ring, start a new cycle and use condoms for the next 7 days.

## Can I use it without a break?

No. At the most, you can wear the ring for a week longer than the usual 3 weeks.