

## Nuva Ring (Birth Control Ring)

### What is the Nuva Ring?

Nuva Ring, also known as the birth control ring, is a type of prescription hormonal birth control that is inserted into the vagina. It is a slender, flexible, odorless, transparent vaginal ring, about as big and round as a silver dollar. You put it in and take it out yourself. The ring stays in place for three weeks in a row, and is removed for the next seven days at the end of the third week. During the one-week break, you will usually have your menstrual period. Nuva Ring contains a combination of an estrogen and progestin, which are similar to the hormones in most birth control pills and mimic women's natural hormones.

### How does the Nuva Ring work?

Nuva Ring prevents pregnancy by delivering a steady, low dose of contraceptive hormones around the clock. This prevents ovulation (the ovaries do not release an egg) and also changes the cervical mucus making it harder for sperm to enter the uterus to fertilize an egg that might be released.

### How effective is Nuva Ring?

If Nuva Ring is used according to directions, it is 98.8% effective over the next year. Each ring delivers continuous levels of hormones into your body. Nuva Ring is one size fits all. Although some women and their partner may feel the Nuva Ring, most do not. Once the ring is in place in the back of the vagina, it will provide 4 weeks of pregnancy protection. Certain drugs may interfere with the effectiveness of the ring. Please discuss any drugs you are using with your health care provider and pharmacist. A non-hormonal method of birth control (e.g. latex condoms) will be needed as a back-up method for the first week of use.

### Does Nuva Ring protect against STDs?

**NO.** Just like all hormonal birth control methods, Nuva Ring does not provide any protection against STDs, including HIV/AIDS. The most effective way of preventing infection, other than abstinence, is to use latex condoms correctly each time you have sex.

### What About Side Effects?

Some women who use Nuva Ring have experienced vaginal irritation or discharge, headaches, nausea, irregular bleeding, weight changes, and moodiness. The use of any hormonal birth control method containing estrogen can slightly increase the risk of rare, serious side effects that can be life threatening, including blood clots, stroke, heart attack, and liver tumors. Smoking increases these risks. Please discuss all these with your medical provider.

### Warning Signs

Serious side effects of the birth control ring are rare. However, if you develop any of the following symptoms while using Nuva Ring, you should call your health care provider right away.

Remember the word "ACHES". It stands for:

- A** Abdominal pain (severe)
- C** Chest pains, coughing blood, breathlessness
- H** Headaches (severe)
- E** Eye problems (blurred, double or loss of vision)
- S** Severe leg pain, swelling, numbness or tingling

### Who should NOT use Nuva Ring?

Pregnant women, women who think they may be pregnant, or women with blood clots, chest pains, certain cancers, unexplained vaginal bleeding, a history of liver disease, stroke, or heart attacks should not use Nuva Ring. Women over age 35 who smoke 15 or more cigarettes per day should not use Nuva Ring. Women who have high blood pressure, migraine headaches, diabetes or severe depression should talk with their healthcare provider to decide if they can safely use Nuva Ring.

