

If not breastfeeding after delivery, then the ring can be used 4 weeks after delivery.

If breastfeeding, the Ring should not be used. Use other birth control methods until you are no longer breastfeeding.

STORAGE OF VAGINAL RING

Before dispensing, the ring should be stored refrigerated at 2-9 degree Celsius for up to 3 months

After dispensing, it should be stored at room temperature below 30 degree Celsius for up to 4 months.

NB. Avoid storing ring in direct sunlight or at temperatures above 30°C

DISPOSAL OF THE VAGINAL RING

Place the used ring in the re-sealable foil pouch and put it in a trash can out of the reach of children and pets. Do not flush in the toilet.

CAUTION

- 1. Do not use ring if you smoke cigarettes and are over 35 years old. Smoking increases your risk of serious heart and blood vessel problems from combined hormonal contraceptives (CHCs). This risk increases with age and the number of cigarettes you smoke.***
- 2. The Hormonal Vaginal Ring does not prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and HPV and may cause local irritation. The users are therefore encouraged to use the ring with a condom to prevent disease transmission at all times.***

THE COMBINED HORMONAL **VAGINAL RING**

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For further information please
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WHAT IS IT?

The Combined Hormonal Vaginal Ring is a flexible ring that is placed inside the vagina to prevent pregnancy.

HOW DOES THE COMBINED HORMONAL VAGINAL RING WORK?

The Combined Hormonal Vaginal Ring work by releasing two hormones called progesterin and oestrogen; which are similar to the natural hormones from a woman.

These hormones are absorbed through the vaginal walls directly into the blood stream to prevent pregnancy.

The ring is inserted into the vagina and remains inside for three weeks. The ring is then removed on the fourth week during which the woman will have her monthly bleeding.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE COMBINED VAGINAL RING?

The vaginal ring is very effective if used consistently and correctly. Its effectiveness is dependent on the user or the client. There is a risk of pregnancy when a new ring is inserted later than day 2 of the menstrual cycle.

The ring has to be inserted once in a month. A new ring is inserted every month and has to stay in the vagina for three weeks before it is removed.

During the fourth week, the woman is ring-free and gets her monthly period or menses.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE RING SLIPS OUT OF THE VAGINA?

- If the ring accidentally slips out of the vagina, it should be rinsed with cold water within 3 hours and re- inserted immediately.
- The ring does not interfere with sexual activity or swimming, however if clients are uncomfortable during sexual intercourse they can remove the ring, keep it safely, wash and re-insert within 3 hours.

WHAT IF THE VAGINAL RING IS LEFT INSIDE FOR MORE THAN 3 WEEKS?

- If the contraceptive vaginal ring is left in place for more than three weeks, its contraceptive effectiveness may have been reduced. It should be removed immediately and put in a new contraceptive vaginal ring without having a break.
- Extra precautions such as using a condom during sex are recommended for seven days if the ring was used for more than three weeks.

WHAT IF I FORGET TO PUT THE NEW RING AFTER THE RING FREE WEEK?

If the client forgets to insert a new ring after the seven-day break, she should put in a new ring as soon as she remembers. There is need for an additional contraception (a condom) for seven days. There is a possibility of becoming pregnant if client have unprotected sex when they have forgotten to insert a new ring.

HOW IS THE RING REMOVED FROM THE VAGINA?

After the third week, the woman should remove the ring using her index finger to pull it out.

WHO CAN USE THE COMBINED HORMONAL VAGINAL RING?

All women who are sexually active who do not have health risks which can be affected by the hormones in the Combined Hormonal Vaginal Ring can use it.

The method should be "prescribed" by a health care worker after confirming that the woman does not have such health risks.

WHO SHOULD NOT USE THE COMBINED HORMONAL VAGINAL RING?

Pregnant women; women with serious heart and blood vessel problems; diabetes with complications affecting kidneys, eyes, nerves, or blood vessels; severe migraine headaches with aura, women who smoke and are over age 35 years, those who have liver disease; have or have had breast cancer or any cancer that is sensitive to female hormones.

NB. Honestly discuss your health problems with your Family Planning service provider.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly effective• Longer periods of user compliance than pills (weekly)• More client control• Side effects are easily reversed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High cost• Challenges with menstruation changes• Vaginal irritation• May disturb during sexual intercourse• Does not protect against STIs including HIV & HPV (virus that causes cervical cancer and genital warts)

VAGINAL RING USE AFTER ABORTION OR MISCARRIAGE OR DELIVERY

After abortion or miscarriage which occurred during the first 3months of pregnancy, Vaginal Ring should be started before 5 days post abortion because fertility returns quickly following a first trimester abortion or miscarriage. If it is inserted 5 days after abortion or miscarriage, a backup method such as male or female condoms should be used for the first 7days.

If abortion or miscarriage occurred between 3 and 6months, or full term delivery has occurred, Vaginal Ring should not be used before 4 weeks (28 days) because the risk of developing a blood clot in the blood vessels is high.