



## CONSENT FOR A VAGINAL CONTRACEPTIVE RING

### What is the vaginal contraceptive ring?

The vaginal contraceptive ring, or ring, is a birth control method that a woman puts into her vagina and leaves in for three weeks to prevent pregnancy. The ring is not removed for intercourse. Unlike the diaphragm, the ring does not require fitting.

### How does the ring work?

The vaginal ring works like birth control pills. It contains the same hormones (estrogen and progestin) found in birth control pills. The ring releases these hormones into the woman's bloodstream at the same rate as the pill. The hormones work together to:

- stop the ovary from releasing an egg every month
- make it harder for the sperm to enter the cervix
- make it harder for the egg to implant in the uterus.

When the ring is used right, it works as well as birth control pills to prevent pregnancy. For every 100 women using the ring, only one or two women per year will become pregnant.

The ring may not work as well to prevent pregnancy if you are taking certain medications. Let your healthcare provider know about any medications that you are taking.

### Who can use the ring?

Women of any reproductive age can use the ring, except women who:

- are pregnant or have had a baby in the last three weeks;
- are breastfeeding during the first six weeks after having a baby;
- have high blood pressure;
- have had breast cancer;
- have a history or family history of blood clots;
- are 35 years of age or older and smoke;
- have a history of heart disease or stroke;
- have a history of severe migraines with neurological symptoms;
- have complicated diabetes;
- have gall bladder disease; or
- have liver tumors, active hepatitis, jaundice, or severe cirrhosis.

If you are a teen and you decide to use the ring, we suggest that you talk to your family about it.

### How is the ring used?

You will insert the ring into your vagina and leave it in place for three weeks in a row and then remove it for one week to allow you to get your period. You should remove the ring three weeks from the day you put it in. Remove it on the same day of the week and at about the

same time of the day that you inserted it. Leave the ring out for one week. Your period will usually start two to three days after you remove the ring.

After the "ring-free" week, you will use a new ring for another three weeks in a row to be followed by another "ring-free" week. Continue this pattern with the rings until you decide not to use this method of birth control any longer.

### Can the ring slip out?

Rarely, the ring can slip out of your vagina if it has not been inserted properly or while you are removing a tampon or moving your bowels. If the ring slips out and it has been out for less than three hours, you should still be protected from becoming pregnant. Rinse the ring with cool to lukewarm (not hot) water and reinsert it as soon as possible. Women with conditions affecting the vagina, such as prolapsed (dropped) uterus, severe constipation, or frequent vaginal infections may be more likely to have the ring slip out of the vagina. If your ring slips out of your vagina repeatedly, discuss it with your healthcare provider.

If the ring is out of place for more than three hours, insert a new ring. You must use a second method of birth control, such as male condoms, until the new ring has been in place for seven days in a row.

### What are the side effects of the ring?

The side effects for the ring are similar to those for birth control pills. Side effects may be different for each woman. The most common side effects reported by women using the ring are headaches, nausea, weight gain, breast pain, painful periods, and depression.

### Does the ring protect against STDs and AIDS?

The ring will not protect you against HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, or against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Women at risk of HIV/AIDS or STDs should use a female condom or a male latex condom in addition to the ring to prevent disease. If you or your partner is allergic to latex, use polyurethane condoms. Your healthcare provider can help you decide if you are at risk of HIV/AIDS or STDs.

### Call your healthcare provider if you have any of the following ACHES:

- A - Abdominal pain (severe), yellow skin or eyes
- C - Chest pain (severe cough, shortness of breath, or pain when breathing in)
- H - Headache, dizziness, weakness, or numbness, especially if on only one side of the head
- E - Eye problems (blurred vision or loss of vision), speech problems
- S - Severe leg pain or swelling

If you have questions about side effects or how to use the ring, don't stop using it. Call your healthcare provider right away.

**I have read and understand the information above.**

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The client has been counseled, provided with the appropriate informational material, and understands the content of both.**

Counselor/Provider signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print counselor/provider name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of patient: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Chart #: \_\_\_\_\_

Interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_