PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Nonoxynol 9

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Options Gynol II Contraceptive [OTC]; Today Sponge [OTC]; VCF Vaginal Contraceptive [OTC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to prevent pregnancy.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

All products:

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you or your partner has HIV infection.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not use this drug if you are pregnant.

Sponge:

- If you have given birth less than 6 weeks ago.
- If you have ever had toxic shock syndrome.
- If you are on your period.
- If you have a sulfite allergy, talk with your doctor.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug does not protect against infections that are spread through having sex like HIV or hepatitis. To protect against these infections, use a latex or polyurethane condom.

- This drug may cause harm if swallowed. If this drug is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right away.
- If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

All products:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Vaginal irritation.
- Burning.
- Trouble passing urine.

- Pain when passing urine.
- Bad-smelling vaginal discharge.
- If your sex partner has irritation of the penis, trouble passing urine, or pain when passing urine.

Sponge:

- Stomach pain.
- Chills.
- Toxic shock syndrome (TSS) has happened with this drug. TSS is rare, but can be very bad and sometimes deadly. Tell your doctor right away if you have diarrhea, dizziness or light-headedness, passing out, fever, muscle pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or a sunburn-like rash.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health

agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1- 800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Do not take this drug by mouth. For vaginal use only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Do not use this drug rectally.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- For more protection against pregnancy, this drug may be used with another type of birth control like condoms or diaphragms.
- If you want to douche, wait at least 6 hours after last intercourse.

Gel and foam:

- Put in the vagina no more than 1 hour before you have sex. If used the right way, this drug works right away and lasts for up to 1 hour. Use this drug again each time you have sex.

- Wash your hands and applicator after use.

Suppository:

- To use suppository, take off foil wrapper.
- Put the suppository in at least 10 minutes before you have sex. If used the right way, this drug works for up to 1 hour.
- Wash your hands after use.

Sponge:

- The sponge can be put in up to 24 hours before you have sex. If used the right way, this drug works at once and lasts for up to 24 hours.
- Leave the sponge in for at least 6 hours after last intercourse. Do not leave in for longer than 30 hours. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- Do not reuse the same sponge.
- Remove the sponge before douching.
- Wash your hands after use.

Film:

- Be sure your hands are dry before you touch this drug.
- Put the film in at least 15 minutes before you have sex. If used the correct way, this drug works for up to 3 hours.

Use this drug again each time you have sex.

- Wash your hands after use.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- This drug is used on an as needed basis. Do not use more often than told by the doctor.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
All products:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Protect from heat.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

Foam:

- Protect from heat or open flame. Do not puncture or burn even if it seems empty.

Gel and Film:

- Protect from cold.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is

not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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