

Tips for Applying a Medicine Patch

The following tips can help keep both you and the person who is ill safe and comfortable while applying and using the medicine patch while optimizing its effectiveness.

**Be sure to check with your healthcare team on the best way to apply a medicine patch.*

Make sure it sticks

- Select the area of skin where you will be placing the patch.
- Choose a flat surface on the upper torso (back or front), arms, or thighs where skin movement is limited. Avoid areas where the skin wrinkles or folds with body movement.
- Select a different area from the previous location to avoid skin discomfort and changes in medication blood levels.
- Do not apply to broken, irritated, or scarred skin or to areas affected by radiation treatments as this can affect adherence and absorption.
- Avoid hairy, swollen, or bony areas, or areas of muscle loss, which can interfere with adherence and absorption.

Prepare the area

Try the following:

- Trim hair with scissors, but avoid shaving the area prior to application of the patch.
- Cleanse the area with water, and allow to dry completely.
- Avoid the use of soaps, cleansers, oils, lotions, alcohol, or other agents that might interfere with adhesion, irritate the skin, or alter the drug's ability to penetrate the skin.

Note:

- Although alcohol-based products should be avoided, if the person who is ill has oily skin, you can try a little isopropyl alcohol first, then gently wash the area well with water to remove the residual alcohol. Allow it to dry completely before applying the patch.
- Avoid the use of “skin prep” products (such as those used to protect skin surfaces or increase adhesion), which create a barrier on the skin that will interfere with absorption of the medication.

Apply the patch

- Warm the patch by holding it (still in its wrap) between the palms of your hands for a few seconds before applying.
- Press the patch firmly in place with the palm of your hand for 30 seconds. Make sure that contact is complete around the entire edge of the patch. This step is important because the contact adhesive is pressure sensitive, and the warmth activates the contact adhesive.
- For certain patches, you may need to apply tape to increase adherence of the patch. Manufacturers recommend the application of a microporous tape around only the edges of the patch.

Note:

- Avoid a covering dressing because it may apply pressure and alter drug release. **This advice may vary according to the type and manufacturer of the patch. Ask your pharmacist to review specific directions, and visit the manufacturer’s website or call their medical information line for further direction.*
- Be aware that the patch contains medication that may be very strong, and that some medication may still remain on the patch when you remove it. It is essential that you wear gloves while preparing, applying, and removing a medicine patch.