

Characteristics of Transdermal Patches

Transdermal patches offer an attractive route of administration for patients who are unable to swallow oral medications and to avoid the need for pain or risks associated with intravenous administration. Patches may also allow for less frequent dosing and improved adherence. Refer to the “*Cheat Sheet*” for *Dos and Don'ts With Patches*, for things to consider that may be similar among most available patches, including application, exposure to heat, disposal, and to help determine if it is safe or appropriate to cut a patch. Use the chart below to determine how to address common questions associated with individual patches, including exposure to water and what to do if patches fall off, as these may be different from patch to patch.

For guidance about when patches can be cut, see our “*Cheat Sheet*” for *Dos and Don'ts With Patches*.

Please note that this table provides information about many brand name and generic patches, yet there may be other generics patches available that are not listed. Information may be different for generic products. Products listed on the chart are representative and may not be all-inclusive.

Medication/ Brand Name	Delivery System ^a	Appearance ^a	What if the patch becomes loose or falls off? ^a	Exposure to water ^a
Buprenorphine (<i>BuTrans</i>)	Matrix	Beige, rectangular or square (varies with dose), imprinted with drug name and strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch becomes loose, may tape edges with first-aid tape, being sure not to cover any printing on the patch. • If the patch comes off, replace with a new patch, rotating sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applying a new patch, starts a new dosing interval. ○ If two patches are worn at the same time and one comes off, remove the other patch; apply two new patches, rotating sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.
Estradiol (<i>Climara</i>)	Matrix	Translucent, oval <i>Estradot</i> Transparent, rectangular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch comes off, apply a new patch, rotating sites and follow same dosing schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.

More...

Medication/ Brand Name	Delivery System ^a	Appearance ^a	What if the patch becomes loose or falls off? ^a	Exposure to water ^a
<p><i>Continued...</i> Estradiol, continued</p> <p>Other brands: Information is the same as <i>Climara</i> unless otherwise noted.</p> <p><i>Estradot, Oesclim, Sandoz Estradiol Derm</i></p>		<p><u><i>Oesclim</i></u> Beige, rectangular, foam-like</p> <p><u><i>Sandoz Estradiol Derm</i></u> Transparent, oval</p>	<p><u><i>Estradot, Oesclim, and Sandoz Estradiol Derm</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch becomes loose or falls off, the same patch may be reapplied, rotating sites. • If unable to reapply, apply a new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. 	
<p>Estradiol/ Levonorgestrel (<i>Climara Pro</i>)</p>	Matrix	Translucent, oval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch becomes loose or falls off, the same patch may be reapplied, rotating sites. • If unable to reapply, apply a new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.
<p>Estradiol/ Norethindrone (<i>Estalis</i>)</p>	Matrix	Round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch becomes loose or falls off, the same patch may be reapplied, rotating sites. • If unable to reapply, apply a new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.
<p>Estradiol/ Norelgestromin (<i>Evra</i>)</p>	Matrix	Beige, plastic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use tapes or wraps to keep the patch in place. • If patch becomes loose or falls off for up to 24 hours, attempt to reapply it, and follow same dosing schedule. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No backup contraception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.²

More . . .

Medication/ Brand Name	Delivery System ^a	Appearance ^a	What if the patch becomes loose or falls off? ^a	Exposure to water ^a
<p><i>Continue...</i></p> <p>Estradiol/ Norelgestromin (Evra), continued</p>			<p>needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If unable to reapply or the patch falls off for >24 hours or an unknown amount of time, apply a new patch, rotating sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Backup contraception needed for the first week of the new cycle. ○ New patch begins a new four-week cycle. 	
<p>Fentanyl (Duragesic)</p> <p>Other brands: Information is the same as Duragesic unless otherwise noted.</p> <p><i>Apo-Fentanyl Matrix, Co Fentanyl, Fentanyl Patch (Pro Doc Limitee), Mylan-Fentanyl Matrix Patch, pms-Fentanyl MTX, Ran-Fentanyl Matrix Patch, Sandoz Fentanyl Patch, Teva-Fentanyl</i></p>	Matrix	<p>Rectangular, thin, tape-like</p> <p><i>Apo-Fentanyl Matrix</i> Tan, rectangular, imprinted with drug name and strength</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May use first-aid tape on the edges, or cover with transparent adhesive dressing if patch becomes loose. • If patch falls off, apply a new patch, rotating sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applying a new patch, starts a new dosing interval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.
<p>Lidocaine/Prilocaine (EMLA)</p>	Absorbant cellulose disc	Tan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patches should only be worn for a maximum of five hours; therefore it is unlikely that patches will become loose or fall off. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patches should only be worn for a maximum of five hours; therefore water exposure should not be an issue.

More . . .

Medication/ Brand Name	Delivery System ^a	Appearance ^a	What if the patch becomes loose or falls off? ^a	Exposure to water ^a
<p>Nicotine (<i>NicoDerm, Habitrol</i>)</p> <p>Information is the same for both products unless otherwise noted.</p>	<p><u>NicoDerm</u>:³ Drug reservoir in a matrix</p> <p><u>Habitrol</u>:⁵ Matrix</p>	<p><u>NicoDerm</u> Transparent, rectangular³</p> <p><u>Habitrol</u> Square</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May use medical adhesive tape, if patch becomes loose (<i>NicoDerm</i>).¹ • If patch falls off, apply new patch, rotating sites.^{a,1} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue with same dosing schedule (<i>Habitrol</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.¹
<p>Nitroglycerin (<i>Minitran</i>)</p> <p>Other brands: Information is the same as <i>Minitran</i> unless otherwise noted.</p> <p><i>Mylan-Nitro, Nitro-Dur, Transderm-Nitro, Trinipatch</i></p>	<p>Controlled-release, remainder serves as reservoir, but is not delivered</p> <p><u>Transderm Nitro</u>: Reservoir</p> <p><u>Trinipatch</u>: Matrix</p> <p><u>Nitro-Dur</u>: Matrix⁴</p>	<p>Clear, oval, tape-like</p> <p><u>Mylan-Nitro</u> Clear, oblong, tape-like, imprinted with drug name and strength</p> <p><u>Nitro-Dur</u> Tan, round</p> <p><u>Transderm-Nitro</u> Tan, rectangular</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch falls off, apply new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. <p><u>Nitro-Dur</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch falls off, clean the skin, apply new patch, rotating sites.⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive. <p><u>Nitro-Dur</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showering is safe to do while wearing the patch.
<p>Oxybutynin (<i>Oxytrol</i>)</p>	<p>Matrix</p>	<p>Translucent, rectangular, imprinted with drug name and strength</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch comes completely off, may attempt to reapply. • If unable to reapply, apply a new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.

More. . .

Medication/ Brand Name	Delivery System ^a	Appearance ^a	What if the patch becomes loose or falls off? ^a	Exposure to water ^a
Rivastigmine (<i>Exelon</i>)	Matrix	Opaque, round, plastic, imprinted with drug name, strength, and the following letters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMCX (5 mg) • BHDI (10 mg) • CNFU (15 mg) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the patch comes off, apply new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.
Rotigotine (<i>Neupro</i>)	Matrix	Beige, square, tape-like, imprinted with an identification mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch comes off, apply a new patch, rotating sites, and follow same dosing schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.
Scopolamine* (<i>Transderm-V</i>) *licensed natural health product	Reservoir ⁶	Tan, disc ⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch comes off, apply a new patch behind the other ear.⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal exposure to water should not affect patch (e.g., bathing, swimming) other than possibly loosening the adhesive.⁷
Testosterone (<i>Androderm</i>)	Reservoir	N/A from the manufacturer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If patch comes off, do not replace it until the nighttime application, rotating sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not known how long to delay showering or swimming after patch application. • It is not necessary to remove while bathing.

a. **Information from Canadian product monograph unless otherwise specified:** *BuTrans* (August 2016); *Climara* (February 2016); *Estradot* (July 2014); *Oesclim* (February 2017); *Sandoz Estradiol Derm* (March 2009); *Climara Pro* (March 2016); *Estalis* (July 2014); *Evra* (February 2017); *Duragesic* (April 2017); *Apo-Fentanyl Matrix* (April 2016); *Co Fentanyl* (November 2014); *Fentanyl Patch* (Pro Doc Limitee, May 2016); *Mylan-Fentanyl Matrix Patch* (February 2017); *pms-Fentanyl MTX* (July 2016); *Ran-Fentanyl Matrix Patch* (August 2016); *Sandoz Fentanyl Patch* (January 2016); *Teva-Fentanyl* (February 2017);

More . . .

2016); *EMLA Patch* (April 2016); *Habitrol* (March 2005); *Minitran* (August 2015); *Mylan-Nitro Patch* (March 2016); *Nitro-Dur* (February 2015); *Transderm-Nitro* (August 2015); *Trinipatch* (January 2009); *Oxytrol* (February 2017); *Exelon Patch* (July 2016); *Neupro* (September 2014); *Androderm* (November 2016).

More . . .

Users of this resource are cautioned to use their own professional judgment and consult any other necessary or appropriate sources prior to making clinical judgments based on the content of this document. Our editors have researched the information with input from experts, government agencies, and national organizations. Information and internet links in this article were current as of the date of publication.

Project Leader in preparation of this clinical resource (330733): Beth Bryant, Pharm.D., BCPS, Assistant Editor

References

1. NicoDerm Canada. About NicoDerm. <https://www.nicoderm.ca/about-nicoderm>. (Accessed June 12, 2017).
2. Personal communication (verbal). Maurice. Medical information. Janssen Inc. Toronto, Ontario M3C 1L9. June 12, 2017.
3. Canoe Health. NicoDerm. <http://chealth.canoe.com/drug/getdrug/nicoderm>. (Accessed June 12, 2017).
4. Personal communication (verbal). Cindy. Medical information. Merck Canada, Inc. Kirkland, QC H9H 4M7. June 12, 2017.
5. Personal communication (verbal). Charlie. Medical information. GlaxoSmithKline Canada. Mississauga, Ontario L5N 6L4. June 13, 2017.
6. Personal communication (verbal). Youcef. Medical Information. Sandoz Canada. A division of Novartis. Boucherville, QC J4B 1E6. June 21, 2017.
7. Information for the consumer for *Transderm-V*. Sandoz Canada. Boucherville, QC J4B 7K8. February 2017.

Cite this document as follows: Clinical Resource, *Characteristics of Transdermal Patches*. Pharmacist's Letter/Prescriber's Letter. July 2017.

trc | pharmacist's letter canada™

Evidence and Recommendations You Can Trust...

trc | prescriber's letter canada™

3120 West March Lane, Stockton, CA 95219 ~ TEL (209) 472-2240 ~ FAX (209) 472-2249
Copyright © 2017 by Therapeutic Research Center

Subscribers to the *Letter* can get clinical resources, like this one, on any topic covered in any issue by going to **PharmacistsLetter.com**, **PrescribersLetter.com**, **PharmacyTechniciansLetter.com**, or **NursesLetter.com**