

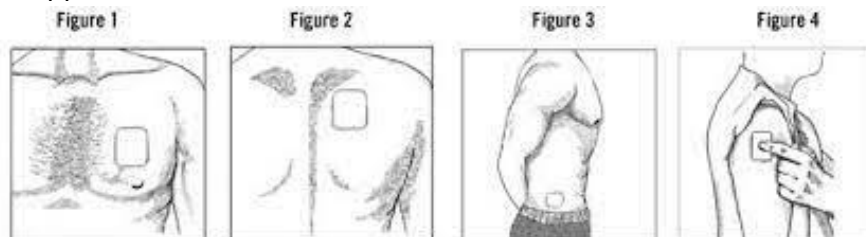
Patient Resource Guide: Safe and Appropriate Fentanyl Patch Use

INTRODUCTION TO FENTANYL PATCHES

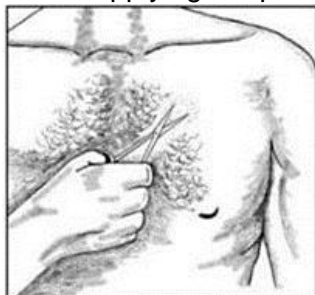
Fentanyl patches, also known by the brand name of Duragesic, are used to help with moderate to severe pain that has been around for a long time, usually several weeks. These patches are not for pain that lasts for a short amount of time. Each patch is intended to provide pain relief for up to 3 days. Fentanyl patches can only be used after other opioid pain medications have been tried. Fentanyl is a very strong opioid pain medication and takes several days to be completely eliminated out of your body after the patch is removed. It is important to follow these guidelines to ensure you and your caregivers stay safe when using these patches.

HOW TO APPLY FENTANYL PATCHES

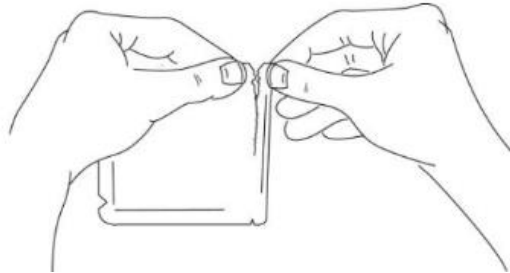
1. First decide where you want to apply the patch
 - a. Patch should be applied to a flat surface, such as the chest, back, above the hips, or upper arm.



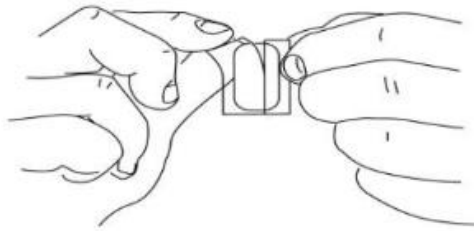
- b. Do not apply to any area of your skin that is cut/open, swollen, red, burned, sore, irritated, or that has been treated with radiation therapy.
 - c. If the site is an area with a lot of hair, the hair can be clipped, but not shaved, before applying the patch. Shaving can cause your skin to become irritated.



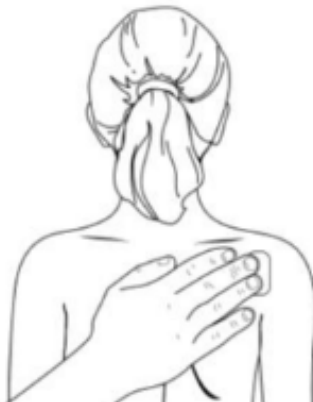
- d. If the site needs to be cleaned prior to application, use water only and allow skin to dry completely before applying the patch. Avoid using soaps, oils, lotions, alcohol, or any other products that might irritate the skin.
 - e. Patches do not need to be placed directly over where the pain is, as the drug will spread to other areas of the body and provide pain relief.
2. Remove patch from outer wrapping only when ready to apply it. Do not remove patch if it will not be applied right away.
- a. When you are ready to apply the patch, carefully tear the pouch open. Do not use scissors, as you could accidentally cut the patch as well.



- b. Carefully remove the protective liner from the back of the patch. Try not to touch the gel on the patch or the sticky edges.

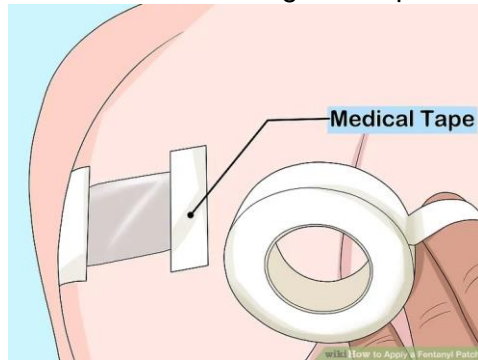


- c. Press the patch onto skin, gel side down, and press with the palm of your hand for at least 30 seconds. Make sure the patch sticks well, especially at the edges.



- d. On a small piece of paper or tape, write the date and time the patch was applied and stick to the top of the patch. This will help you to remember when the patch needs to be changed. Each patch is worn for up to 3 days. Do not keep patches on longer than 3 days.

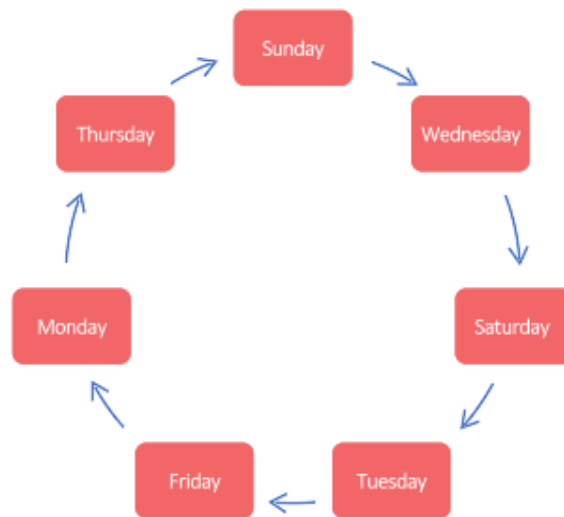
- e. If you are having issues with a patch not sticking well, you can tape the edges of the patch with first aid tape. If this does not work, you can place a transparent adhesive film dressing over top of the patch.



- f. Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after applying a patch.

REPLACING YOUR PATCHES

- 1. Wear each patch continuously for 3 days, unless directed otherwise by your care team. The following diagram can help you to know what day of the week you should replace your patches. Find the day of the week that your patch was applied. Follow the arrow clockwise to the next day of the week on the diagram and mark this as the day to replace your patch.



- a. For example: If you apply a patch on Sunday, you should replace it on Wednesday.
- 2. Be sure to remove the old patch first before applying a new patch.

3. Fold the old patch in half so that the sticky sides are together. Dispose of patch right away by flushing down the toilet.



- a. Patches should not be thrown into regular household trash where children or pets can find them. The protective backing and outer pouch can be thrown in the trash, but the patches themselves should not be.
 - b. Even after the patches are used, there is still enough drug left to be harmful to others.
 - c. If not disposed of properly, these patches can cause severe harm, including death, if other people, especially children, or pets are accidentally exposed.
4. When applying a new patch, do not apply to the same area the old patch was just removed from.
 - a. Using the same site every time can cause skin irritation or thinning of the skin. This can cause the drug to get into your system faster than it is supposed to, which can result in an unintentional overdose and toxicity.
 - b. After 5-7 days of removal from an area, you can apply to that same previously used area again.
 5. Wash hands immediately with soap and water after handling the patches.

FENTANYL PATCH SAFETY

- Do not apply patch if outer wrapping is open, or if it is altered, cut, or damaged in any way.
- Only apply whole patches. Do not cut patches, as this can cause the medication to be released faster than it is supposed to. This could lead to potentially fatal overdoses.
- Avoid exposing the application site and surrounding area to direct external heat sources, including heating pads, electric blankets, heat or tanning lamps, sunbathing, hot baths, saunas, and hot tubs. Exposure to direct heat sources can increase the amount of fentanyl that you get in your body. This also can lead to a potentially fatal unintentional overdose.
- When exercising, wear loose clothing to help prevent your body from overheating. Avoid strenuous exercise while using fentanyl patches.

- Remove patch prior to an MRI. Keeping the patch on during the MRI can cause your skin to burn and can even cause fentanyl toxicity. A new patch can be applied once the MRI has been completed.
- Do not wear patches for longer than 3 days.
- If the patch dislodges and sticks to the skin of another person, they should immediately take the patch off, wash the exposed area with water, and seek medical attention.
- Store unused patches out of the reach of children and pets and in a cool, dry place away from heat and light.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

- Fentanyl is an opioid pain medication and has many of the same side effects as other opioid pain medications. Some of the most common with fentanyl patches include:
 - Skin irritation where patch applied
 - Helpful tip: If your skin is becoming irritated from the patches, you can spray some Flonase on the application site prior to applying the patch. This can be purchased over the counter; no prescription is needed.
 - Constipation
 - Drowsiness
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Excess sweating
 - Headache
 - Dry mouth
 - Dizziness
- When to contact your care team and/or seek medical attention:
 - Signs and symptoms of toxicity and overdose:
 - Pinpoint pupils
 - Change in alertness or being hard to wake up
 - Hallucinations
 - Quick shallow breaths
 - Trouble breathing
 - Slow breathing rate
 - Signs of an allergic reaction:
 - Rashes
 - Facial swelling
 - Shortness of breath
 - If you develop a fever while using fentanyl patches
- For signs of an overdose or allergic reaction, remove the patch immediately and contact your care team.

For any questions or concerns, please contact your hospice agency.

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