



## **Contraceptive Implant FACT SHEET**

**The contraceptive implant which is also known as Nexplanon®** is a matchstick-sized subdermal contraceptive implant. This thin, flexible plastic rod is inserted under the skin of your arm by your healthcare provider. The implant works by releasing a small amount of progesterone, a hormone that women make naturally. This hormone prevents the egg from being released from the ovary, and it thickens cervical mucous to prevent sperm from reaching an egg. The implant is one of the most effective methods at preventing pregnancy, more than 99% effective.

**The implant does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).** Condoms are the best way for sexually active people to reduce the risk of infection. Always use a condom to prevent STIs.

### **Advantages of the implant:**

- Highly effective reversible birth control
- Can be used while breastfeeding
- Nothing to do right before sex to make it work
- Ability to become pregnant returns quickly when removed
- Approved for three years, may be effective for longer

### **Possible disadvantages of the implant:**

- Most women have some irregular menstrual bleeding or spotting when using the implant
- Some women may stop having menstrual periods completely
- Side effects – some women experience side effects such as weight gain, breast tenderness, or change in mood
- Needs to be placed and removed by a health care provider

### **Risks of using the implant:**

- **Infection** – It is possible but rare to get an infection at the site of insertion or removal at the implant
- **Pregnancy** – It is uncommon to get pregnant when you have an implant in place. If you do become pregnant, the implant should be removed. There is no evidence that the implant causes birth defects.
- **Migration of the implant** – Very rarely, the implant may move slightly within the arm. This can make removal of the implant difficult and the removal may need to be done under x-ray or with other special equipment.

### **The implant cannot be used by women who:**

- Are, or think they are pregnant
- Currently have, or have a history of breast cancer
- Have liver disease
- Have abnormal vaginal bleeding that has not been evaluated

The implant may be less effective for some women taking certain anticonvulsant (anti-seizure) or anti-retroviral medications. Tell your clinician if you have any of these risk factors or conditions, or if you are being treated for any medical illnesses.

**Warning Signs – please call your health care provider right away if you:**

- Notice redness, swelling, or unusual pain at the implant insertion site
- Think you might be pregnant
- Have been, or think you may have been exposed to an STI
- Have increasing depression or change in mood

**Instructions after insertion:**

- You may remove the gauze pressure bandage 24 hours after insertion
- Leave the bandages covering the insertion site for 2-3 days
- Bruising and mild discomfort are common after insertion

Regular physical examinations for routine health care and for STIs and cancer screening are strongly recommended.