

The contraceptive implant, Nexplanon

This leaflet is written for women who would like a subdermal contraceptive implant (Nexplanon) inserted just under the skin.

A detailed leaflet regarding the contraceptive implant can be found on the following website: <http://www.fpa.org.uk/contraception-help/contraceptive-implant>

Information about the implant:

Nexplanon is a small rod which is inserted just under the skin in a woman's arm which releases a progesterone like hormone slowly over 3 years. The hormone stops a woman producing an egg which means that it is a very effective form of contraception. In a thousand women using the implant, less than 1 will become pregnant over 3 years.

The implant is fitted under a local anaesthetic, so you should not feel any pain. However you may feel pushing and pulling as the implant is inserted.

Frequently occurring risks at the time of insertion:

- Infection and / or bruising to skin
- Scarring of skin

Serious risks at the time of fitting:

- Deep insertion – which may be more difficult to remove
- Non insertion
- Injury to nerve or blood vessel, including migration– very rare – less than 1 in 10,000 insertions

Side effects of the implant:

- Unpredictable bleeding pattern: 1 in 3 - infrequent bleeding, 1 in 4 – prolonged or frequent bleeding, 1 in 4 - regular bleeds; 1 in 5 - no bleeding
 - bleeding pattern may change at any time
 - bleeding pattern usually improves given time but may take 6 – 9 months to settle.
- Hormonal side effects : Headaches, breast tenderness, acne (spots)
- Although some women report changes in mood, weight and libido (sex drive) there is no evidence that the implant causes these problems.

After your Nexplanon fitting

A pressure bandage will be put on your arm to reduce bruising. It is important that you keep this clean and dry. You can use your arm normally but try not to knock the area. The bandage can be removed after 24 hours. If your arm feels numb, cold or tingly, please loosen the bandage as it is not intended to reduce blood flow through your arm.

You may find that you have some mild bruising and discomfort around the site of insertion after the local anaesthetic has worn off. It is safe to treat this with your usual pain killers such as paracetamol. Alternatively, Ibuprofen (Nurofen) can be taken if you have no medical reason such as asthma or stomach ulcers not to take them.

Some irregular spotting/bleeding is common after the fitting. In the first year, most women will have irregular bleeding. All women are different and some may have heavier bleeds and some will not bleed at all. These changes may be a nuisance but they will not

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affect how Nexplanon works to prevent pregnancy. If you have any concerns, please make an appointment to see us or your GP.

It is important to return for follow-up if the doctor or nurse has advised you to. Otherwise, there is no need for a routine check after Nexplanon is fitted, UNLESS any of the following occur:

- The skin looks red and angry around the site of insertion;
- You cannot feel the implant (use condoms until you are seen);
- You think you may be pregnant;
- You are unhappy with any side-effects including the bleeding pattern;
- You want to try for a baby.

How soon does it work?

• Implant fitted before day 5 of menstrual cycle	immediate
• Implant fitted after day 5 of menstrual cycle	7 days after insertion
• Changing from another method	as advised by the doctor/nurse

Day 1 is the first day of your period.

How long does the implant last?

The implant will be effective for 3 years from the date of fitting. You will be given a record card stating which arm the implant is in and the latest date by which it should be removed. Keep this in a safe place for future reference.

Note: it is recommended that your Nexplanon is removed or replaced on or before the date on your card.

You will not be automatically recalled or sent reminders

Advice regarding the removal of the contraceptive implant.

A pressure bandage will be put on your arm to reduce bruising. It is important that you keep this clean and dry. If your arm feels numb, cold or tingly, please loosen the bandage as it is not intended to reduce blood flow through your arm. The bandage can be removed after 24 hours. You may see that the doctor or nurse has put some steri-strip ('butterfly') plasters over the small incision. These will come off on their own, either in the bath or shower over the next few days, or you may remove them yourself after about 5 days. Dampen the steri-strips with water and peel off gently. Please return for follow-up if the skin looks red and angry around the site of removal. If you don't want to become pregnant, you should start to use an alternative method of contraception immediately.

Any problems / questions?

Contact your sexual health clinic or telephone 0300 300 2016

Clinic times are available from our website: www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk