

All about the Birth Control Implant

The Birth Control Implant is a small, soft, thin tube placed under the skin of the upper arm to keep you from getting pregnant.

The implant has a hormone that keeps the woman's eggs from leaving her ovaries. It also thickens the mucus at the opening of the uterus so the man's sperm cannot get inside.

How does the Implant work?

You must go to a health care provider to get the implant inserted. The birth control implant is about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches long. The implant releases the right amount of hormone into your body to keep you from getting pregnant.

The implant lasts for 3 years. You must go back to your provider at the end of the 3 years to have the implant removed or replaced with a new one. Remember, you can ask to have the implant removed at any time and for any reason.

How well does the Implant work?

The implant works very well to prevent pregnancy. Fewer than 1 in 100 women who use the implant for a year will get pregnant.

How do I get an Implant?

You must go to a specially trained health care provider. In the office, the clinician can insert the implant under the skin of your upper arm. Your Family PACT provider will help you decide the best time to have it inserted.

What do some women like about it?

- ◆ It lasts for 3 years.
- ◆ It is easy to use.
- ◆ There are no pills to take every day.
- ◆ No one can tell if you are using it.

What do some women dislike?

- ◆ The implant will cause changes in your period.
- ◆ The implant may cause other side effects like headaches or acne. However, these rarely occur.
- ◆ It must be put in and taken out by a clinician.
- ◆ You can feel the implant when you press on your arm where it was placed.
- ◆ You may have a tiny scar on your arm where it was put in.

How is the Birth Control Implant put in?

It usually takes less than a minute to put the implant in place.

- ◆ First, the skin is cleaned.
- ◆ Next, the spot where the implant will be put in is numbed.
- ◆ Using a special inserter, the implant is pushed in just under the skin.

A small bandage is put on to protect the spot for a few days.

How is the Implant taken out?

It takes less than 5 minutes to take the implant out.

- ◆ First, the skin over the implant is cleaned and numbed.
- ◆ Next, a small cut is made and the implant is taken out.
- ◆ If you want to keep using the implant, a new one can be put in through the same cut.

You can choose to take the implant out at any time. It should be taken out after 3 years.

What about the side effects?

All women who use the implant have a change in their periods. There is no way to tell what kind of bleeding change you will have until the implant is put in.

- You will not know when you will have your period.
- You may have spotting between periods.
- You may have longer or shorter periods.

Because of these menstrual changes, you should keep a pad with you. Other uncommon side effects include acne, headaches, weight gain, breast pain, and mood changes.

There are no known major health problems from using the implant.

Are there any problems when the Implant is put in or taken out?

Most women don't have problems when the implant is put in or taken out.

Some women feel tugging or pressure when the implant is put in or taken out. The spot where the implant is put in may be slightly bruised or sore until it heals.

Rarely, there are other problems. A few women have had the implant come out. There is a small risk of infection where the implant was put in or taken out.

The Implant may not be safe for some women.

Before choosing the implant, talk to your Family PACT provider about any health problems you may have. For example:

- ◆ If you have unexplained vaginal bleeding.
- ◆ If you have a history of blood clots.
- ◆ If you have had breast cancer now or in the past.
- ◆ If you have liver problems.
- ◆ If you are allergic to anything in the implant.

The Birth Control Implant will not protect you from HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) or other infections people get from having sex.

Use condoms (for men or women) when you have sex to help protect yourself from these infections.