

# All about the Contraceptive Implant

**The Contraceptive Implant is a small plastic tube containing a hormone placed under the skin of the upper arm to keep you from getting pregnant for 3 years.**

You must go to a health care provider to get the Implant put in. The Implant releases the right amount of hormone into your body to keep you from getting pregnant.



The Contraceptive Implant is about 1¾ inches long.

## How does the Implant work?

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

## 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.

## What do some women like about it?

- ◆ It lasts for 3 years.
- ◆ You don't have to think about birth control.
- ◆ There are no pills to take every day.
- ◆ No one can tell if you are using it.
- ◆ It is a good method if you have to avoid estrogen.
- ◆ It makes periods less painful.

## 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.



The Implant is placed under the skin in the woman's upper arm.

## How do I get an Implant?

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

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 and replaced with a new one or switch to another birth control method. You can ask to have the Implant removed at any time and for any reason.

## How is the 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 placed just under the skin.

## 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 ask your provider to take the Implant out at any time. It must be taken out after 3 years because it will no longer be working.

## 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 change in your period you will have until the Implant is put in.

- ◆ You will not know when your period will start.
- ◆ 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.

## 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. Very rarely, the Implant is placed too deeply and tests must be done to find it before it is removed.

## 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.
- ◆ A history of blood clots in your leg or lungs.
- ◆ Had breast cancer now or in the past.
- ◆ Liver problems, like hepatitis or cirrhosis.
- ◆ Allergies to anything in the Implant.

The Implant does not protect you from HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) and other infections people get from having sex.

Use condoms (for men or women) along with the Implant to protect yourself from these infections.