

**The Contraceptive Implant or ‘Nexplanon’**

A contraceptive implant is a small, flexible rod that’s placed just under the skin of your upper arm.

It releases a progestogen hormone similar to the natural progesterone produced by the ovaries.

It works for 3 years.

For further information please visit:[Contraceptive implant - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/contraceptive-implant/)

Prior to the appointment

Until your implant is fitted it is important to continue with your current contraception or to abstain from sexual intercourse after your last period.

If your current contraception is an implant and you are attending for removal and refit (exchange) you do not need extra precautions if your current implant is still effective (less than 3 years old).

If you have had it for more than three years you should use additional contraception until the implant is fitted and for 7 days after insertion of a new implant. In some instances an implant may be fitted where there is an existing pregnancy risk, for example straight after taking emergency contraception. In this case you will be advised to use additional precautions (for example condoms) for 7 to 14 days depending on the circumstances and perform a pregnancy test in three to four weeks’ time.

Preparing for the appointment

You must collect the contraceptive implant prescription from the pharmacy and bring it to the appointment.

Fitting

* Keep the dressing dry for 24 hours to allow the incision site to heal. After 24 hours you can bathe with the dressing on. The dressing is still effective if it gets wet and dries naturally following bathing.
* Remove the dressing carefully in 3 - 5 days.
* It is common to have bruising. This should fade over the next week or so.
* Your arm may ache after the anaesthetic spray has worn off. Take a painkiller such as paracetamol if necessary. There will be a small scar at site of insertion.
* Occasionally the skin gets itchy over the implant site. If this happens use an antihistamine cream.
* St John’s Wort may affect how your implant works. Avoid this. The majority of prescribed drugs do not affect the implant, however if you are given any treatment by your GP, or if you buy any medication - ask your GP or pharmacist if it will interfere with your implant.
* Depending on what contraception you were using before the implant was inserted, the person fitting the implant may advise additional precautions for seven to 14 days (for example condoms).

Control of irregular bleeding

* If you find the bleeding unacceptable please return to either the college nurse, school nurse, GP or local sexual health services who may give you a supply of the contraceptive pill to take continuously to settle the bleeding.
* If this works in controlling the bleeding then you can return for more pills.
* If it does not help the bleeding it is important to return to the college nurse, school nurse, GP or local sexual health service to discuss this and exclude any other problems that may be causing the bleeding. Other causes may be: pregnancy sexually transmitted infection (for example chlamydia) gynaecological reason

For further information please see the Family Planning Association (FPA) “your guide to the contraceptive” implant leaflet or visit: www.fpa.org.uk/

Implant removal and refit

* After the procedure: Keep the dressing dry for 24 hours to allow the incision site to heal.
* Remove the dressing carefully in three to five days.
* It is common to have bruising. This should fade over the next week or so.
* Your arm may ache after the local anaesthetic has worn off. Take a painkiller such as paracetamol if necessary.
* There will be a small scar at the site of insertion or removal.
* If you do not have a further implant fitted or if you are not using any alternative contraception your fertility will return immediately.
* If you do not wish to be pregnant following implant removal it is recommended that you start another method of contraception as soon as possible. It is better to start your chosen contraception before your implant is removed.