

# The Implant

## What is the implant?

The implant is a small and flexible plastic rod that is placed just under the skin on the upper part of the inner arm to prevent pregnancy.

## How does it work?

The implant gives off the hormone progestin. Progestin stops your ovaries from releasing eggs and thickens cervical mucus so sperm can't get into the uterus and make you pregnant.

## How long does it last?

The implant prevents pregnancy for as long as 3 years. At the end of 3 years, the implant is removed and another can be placed under your skin to prevent pregnancy.

## How effective is it?

The implant is one of the most effective forms of birth control. Less than 1% of women who use the implant will get pregnant in a year.

## What are the benefits of using the implant?

- Effective and long-acting birth control method
- Reversible: You can get pregnant soon after having the implant removed
- Convenient: "Get it and forget it."
- Can be used after giving birth and while breastfeeding
- No estrogen, if estrogen is a concern
- Private: No one needs to know you are using birth control

## What can I expect after the implant is put in my arm?

You may have a small bruise or a little soreness around the place where the implant is put. This discomfort should go away on its own. However, if the area is very red, swollen or tender, you may have an infection. Call your clinic.



## What will my period be like while using the implant?

Expect irregular periods while using the implant. You may have lighter or heavier periods, bleeding between periods, or no periods at all. The time between your periods may change from month to month.

These changes in bleeding are safe and expected.

Tell all your health care providers about any medications you are taking, including the implant. A few medications can make the implant less effective in preventing pregnancy. There are other birth control methods that you may want to use.

## When can I start having sex after I get my implant?

The implant prevents pregnancy right way if it is inserted within five days of the start of your period. Otherwise, use an additional form of birth control or don't have sex for 7 days after insertion.

## What if I want to stop using the implant or want to get pregnant?

Your health care provider can take out the implant at any time. You can get pregnant as soon as the implant is taken out, so be sure to use another method of birth control if you do not want to get pregnant right away.

The implant does not protect against sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Always use a condom to help protect yourself from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

## What side effects does the implant have?

Some women experience side effects that can include acne, headaches, nausea, breast tenderness, changes in sex drive, changes in appetite, weight gain and moodiness.

If you have any questions or concerns about side effects, talk to your health care provider.

## Warning Signs:

Call your clinic immediately if you:

- Think you may be pregnant
- Have heavy or prolonged bleeding from your vagina

Or experience:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Severe headache
- Severe pain or numbness in your arm or leg
- New problems with your eyesight, like blurry vision or seeing spots
- Severe abdominal pain

These can be signs of rare but serious life-threatening health problems, such as heart attack, stroke, or blood clots in the veins or lungs, and require the care of a medical provider.