**The Contraceptive Implant (Nexplanon)**

**Firs House Surgery**

*Information below condensed from FPA’s Pamphlet ‘Your Guide to Contraceptive Implant’*

A contraceptive implant is a small, flexible rod that’s placed just under your skin in your upper arm. It releases a progestogen hormone similar to the natural progesterone produced by the ovaries. It works for three years.

**How effective is an implant?**

The implant is over 99% effective. Less than one implant user in 100 will get pregnant in one year. When the implant is used for three years, less than one implant user in every 1,000 will get pregnant over three years.

The implant is a method of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC). LARC is very effective because it doesn’t depend on you remembering to take or use it.

**How does an implant work?**

The main way it works is to stop your ovaries releasing an egg each month (ovulation). It also thickens the mucus from your cervix (neck of the womb), making it difficult for sperm to move through it and reach an egg makes the lining of your uterus (womb) thinner so it’s less likely to accept a fertilised egg.

**What are the disadvantages of an implant?**

Your periods may change in a way that isn’t acceptable to you.

You may get temporary side effects when you first start using the implant. These should stop within a few months. They may include headaches, breast tenderness and mood changes. You may get acne or your acne may get worse.

It’s not suitable if you use enzyme-inducing drugs

It requires a small procedure to fit and remove it.

An implant doesn’t protect you against sexually transmitted infections, so you may need to use condoms as well.

**Are there any risks?**

Very rarely, soon after the implant is put in, you may get an infection in your arm where it’s been inserted.

Research about the risk of breast cancer and hormonal contraception is complex and contradictory. Research suggests women who use hormonal contraception may have a small increase in the risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer compared to women who don’t use hormonal contraception.

**When can I start using an implant?**

You can have an implant fitted at any time in your menstrual cycle if it’s certain that you’re not pregnant. If the implant is put in during the first five days of your period you’ll be protected from pregnancy immediately.

If the implant is put in on any other day you won’t be protected from pregnancy for the first seven days after it’s been fitted. You’ll need to avoid sex or use additional contraception, such as condoms, during this time. If you are on other forms of contraception, you will discuss with the doctor how to bridge contraception around the insertion of the Nexplanon in order to ensure contraception continuity.

Full Leaflet at <https://sexwise.fpa.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource/2017-09/contraceptive-implant-your-guide.pdf>.

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**Advice for Patients after insertion of Nexplanon®**

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| ***When is my Nexplanon effective from?***If you have had the Implant inserted on day 1 to 5 of your period then it will be effective immediately.If you are still using the combined oral contraceptive pill, the progestogen only pill, the contraceptive patch, the contraceptive injection (Depo-Provera ), an in date IUD/IUS or an Implant inserted within the past 3 years, then the Implant will also be effective immediately. (Discuss when to stop current method of contraception after nexplanon insertion to ensure no break in effectiveness of contraception.) Otherwise you will need to wait for 7 days for the Implant to become fully effective.  |
| ***Looking after the insertion site*** The pressure bandage this should be kept on for the next 24 hours to help reduce bruising and swelling around the insertion site. It should be loosened if tingling, numbness or colour change occurs. Please keep the site of insertion dry for the next 3 days. You can remove the elastoplast and steristrips in 3 days. |
| ***Follow up*** A routine follow-up appointment is not required after having the Implant fitted but you should contact the surgery if you have any concerns. It is not unusual to experience some irregular bleeding with the Implant. There are treatments that can be offered to try to help settle the bleeding.  |
|  ***You should have your Implant removed / changed by ............................................***  |

**Advice for Patients after removal of Nexplanon®**

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| ***Ongoing Contraception......................................................................................*** Implants stop working very quickly after removal. If you do not wish to get pregnant you should start using another method of contraception immediately.  |
| ***Looking after the removal site*** To help reduce bruising and swelling around the insertion site you should keep the pressure bandage on for the next 24 hours. It should be loosened if tingling, numbness or colour change occurs.You can remove the steri-strips in 3 days.It is rare to develop infection at the insertion/ removal site; however, if you do develop symptoms of this and/or are concerned, please book in to see a GP in surgery.  |