

# fact sheet

## The Implant

The birth control implant, known by its brand name Nexplanon, is a small, rod-shaped device that releases hormone continuously into the body. It is a one-time implant in the arm that provides reliable contraception for 3 years. The implant does NOT protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

### **How does it work?**

The implant releases the progestin hormone etonogestrel. This hormone prevents the release of an egg and makes it difficult for sperm to cross the cervix. Together, these effects make pregnancy unlikely.

### **When does it start working?**

If you get the implant within the first 5 days of your period, it will start working right away. If you get it at any other time, make sure you use backup birth control, like condoms, for about a week.

### **How effective is it?**

The implant is one of the most effective forms of contraception, with a success rate of over 99%.

### **How do I use it?**

All you need to do is schedule an appointment with your health care provider to get the rod implanted in your arm. Return in 3 years or when you are ready to become pregnant, whichever comes first, to have it removed.

### **What are the downsides of the implant?**

The most common side effect of the implant is spotting within the first year. It can lighten periods over time and even make them go away, but in rare cases it may make them heavier. Discomfort in the arm at the implant site is also common but temporary.

### **Is it right for me?**

Comfort with an invasive form of birth control is an important factor to keep in mind when it comes to the implant. You may want to consider another form of birth control if you plan to become pregnant within the next 4 years, since the implant *can* work for that long.

### **What if I want to get pregnant soon?**

The implant does not permanently affect your chances of getting pregnant. If you are ready to become pregnant, see your provider to have the implant removed. Do not attempt to take it out yourself. It is possible to get pregnant soon after the implant is removed.