

Contraceptive Implant (Implanon)

What is Implanon?

Implanon – often known as the bar or rod – belongs to a group of contraceptive options called Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC). These are the most effective forms of preventing pregnancy.

Implanon is a 4cm long contraceptive device made out of soft plastic. It is inserted under the skin in the upper arm after the skin has been numbed with local anaesthetic.

Implanon contains the hormone etonogestrel, which is a synthetic version of the hormone progesterone that women make naturally. This hormone is slowly released from the bar into the bloodstream.

Implanon does not give you protection from sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The best way to reduce the risk of STIs is to use a barrier method such as condoms.

How does Implanon work?

Implanon prevents ovulation by changing the hormones that cause an egg to be released each month and it thickens the mucus at the neck of the uterus (womb), blocking the sperm from getting in.

How do I get an Implanon?

You can get an Implanon inserted at Family Planning Tasmania clinics, some GPs, private gynaecologists and in public hospitals.

It is safe to have an Implanon inserted as soon as you have a baby.

Implanon insertion at Family Planning Tasmania involves usually one, but sometimes two, appointments. As we have a supply of Implanons in our clinics, you can usually get the Implanon inserted in one appointment.

How effective is Implanon?

- Implanon is over 99.95% effective at preventing pregnancy.
- Implanon lasts for three years- then you need to get it removed and replaced.
- Implanon does not provide protection against Sexually Transmitted Infection (STIs).
- Implanon is suitable for most people including those breastfeeding and immediately after childbirth.
- Your menstrual cycle will usually return to normal within 4-6 weeks of getting the Implanon removed and your fertility typically quickly return to what is normal for you.



Implanon are small plastic bars with hormones that get implanted in your arm

1. Assessment & Insertion

At the appointment, your doctor will discuss the procedure and check that an Implanon is right for you. The Implanon can often be inserted at the same appointment.

Implanon is inserted via a minor surgical procedure:

1. Local anaesthetic is given to numb the skin.
2. Implanon is inserted using a special applicator with no stitches required
3. A pressure bandage is applied to reduce bruising

2. Follow up

Your doctor may ask you to return for a follow up appointment. This can include checking the insertion site and performing a pregnancy test.

Advantages of Implanon

- It is the most effective method of contraception, along with other LARCs.
- Once inserted, you can forget about it for three years.
- A quick return to normal fertility for you - your period will usual (ability to have a baby)- your period will usually return after around one month.
- It is safe to use when breastfeeding.
- Implanon can be taken out at any time by a trained doctor or nurse.
- It may make your period lighter, less painful or may stop it all together (this is completely safe).
- May help control acne.
- Not affected by infections like gastro.

Visit our website to book an Implanon appointment here:



Possible side effects

- Bruising and mild soreness at the site of insertion or removal that can last up to two weeks. A small scar may remain.
- Initially, you might experience three to five months of frequent and irregular bleeding between periods. Medication is available to help with these symptoms.
- 20% of users will stop having periods completely (this is completely safe).
- Some users may experience acne, breast tenderness, moodiness, increased appetite and headaches

If you have persistent bleeding, contact Family Planning Tasmania.

What else do I need to know?

- Usually Implanon is inserted near your under arm, where the scar won't be very visible.
- Implanon can be inserted at any time that pregnancy can be confidently excluded (you are definitely not pregnant). If pregnancy cannot be excluded, you may need a pregnancy test four weeks after insertion to rule out pregnancy.
- The Implanon must be removed by a trained health professional who will remove it by applying a local anesthetic and making a small cut in the skin. Very rarely, one stitch may be required. It is usually an easy and short procedure.

Is Implanon right for me?

You may not be able to have an Implanon if you:

- are currently pregnant
- have breast cancer
- have severe liver disease
- have abnormal vaginal bleeding or
- are taking certain medications.

For more information, support and advice visit www.fpt.org.au

FPT acknowledges the contribution of FPV in the development of this fact sheet

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