

Family Planning

Welfare Association of NT Inc.

ABN 38 812 238 738

Family Planning Welfare Association of the NT Inc exists to provide quality health care and education services in reproductive and sexual health

IMPLANON

Progesterone Implant (Implanon NXT®)

The implant is a matchstick sized plastic rod placed under the skin on the inside of the upper arm, using local anaesthetic to numb the area. Once in place it gives contraception for three years. It does this by releasing small amounts of a progesterone like female hormone, etonogestrel. It does not contain Oestrogen which may be not recommended for some woman.

How does it work?

Its main action is to prevent the ovaries from releasing an egg. It also thickens the mucus at the cervix (entrance to the womb), making it very difficult for sperm to get through thus preventing implantation.

How effective is it?

It is 99.95% effective and lasts up to 3 years.

It is very effective birth control: if 1000 women used it as contraception for one year it is possible that up to 1 would get pregnant.

When is it inserted, and when is it effective?

It can be inserted at any time during the cycle so long as pregnancy has been excluded. It will be effective at preventing pregnancy 7 days after insertion. **Remember to use condoms or avoid having sex for the first 7 days after insertion**

Advantages:

- It is long lasting, and very effective
- It is cheap - (about the cost of four months of a pill script)
- It does not have to be remembered every day
- It can be removed at any time and must be removed/swapped after 3 years
- Once removed, fertility can return immediately.
- It is an option for women who cannot take the female hormone oestrogen, i.e. diabetics, when breastfeeding, past blood clotting problems, migraines, or high blood pressure
- There are only a few women for whom this form of contraception is medically unsuitable

What are the side effects, or possible problems?

- A full health history will be taken & your suitability advised on an individual level.
- A woman's usual bleeding patterns will be changed, but bleeding tends to be less overall.
- Irregular bleeding is common, with spotting or frequent bleeding also possible. The bleeding pattern may take 6-12 months to settle down.

- Weight gain, moodiness, skin and hair changes are possible side-effects, especially within the first 3 months.
- Decreased libido
- Breast tenderness and headaches are usually less than with the pill
- Bruising at the insertion site is common, but infection and bleeding are rare.
- The implant may be difficult to remove if inserted too deeply, but it is very unlikely to move from its original placement if looked after correctly.
- The method may not be strong enough for women on epilepsy tablets or some other medications.

How is it inserted?

The site is cleansed with antiseptic and local anaesthetic is put under the skin using a small needle. The implant is inserted just under the skin and a firm bandage applied for 24 hours to minimise bruising. You will be given a small card showing the dates of insertion and removal. This should be kept in a safe place.

How do I look after the insertion site?

For the first 24 hours, the bandage on your arm must be kept dry and in place. Do not rub the site or fiddle with the implant at anytime. Phone the clinic to organise a return visit if you note any increase in pain or swelling in your arm.

You need to return for a health check three months after the insertion, and if all is well return for your PAP smear and breast checks when due. The implant must be removed / swapped after three years.

How is the implant removed?

The implant is felt under the skin and the site is cleaned with antiseptic. A small amount of local anaesthetic is put under the skin with a small needle. The implant is removed through a small cut in the skin which is normally not large enough to need stitches. A bandage should be kept in place for 24 hours to minimise bruising.

**For further information please call:
Family Planning NT 8948-0144**

NT HEALTH DIRECT 1800 022 222

or visit: www.fpwnt.com.au