

ETONOGESTREL EXTENDED-RELEASE SUBDERMAL IMPLANT (NEXPLANON)

What is Nexplanon?

- Thin, flexible implant (about the size of a matchstick) inserted under local anaesthetic in your upper arm.
- Great new option of long-acting pregnancy prevention that lasts for 3 years.
- Has about 10 times higher hormone levels than standard birth control pills.
- Very effective in preventing pregnancies. Lowest rate in studies - 0.05%, IUD 0.25%, vasectomy 0.15%, copper 0.8% and birth control pill 6%.
- Family of Desogestrel (used in Marvelon). Works by preventing ovulation, but effective after day 7, and reaches peak day 7 to 21 after insertion.
- Wears off within 7 - 14 days post removal - so fertile within 1 cycle.

Who is it for?

- Women of any age, even as young as 14.
- Women who experience pain with IUD insertions
- Women who recently gave birth or had an abortion (5 days after miscarriage, and 21 days after a birth).
- Safe for breast-feeding moms, and will not affect the fetus or cause a miscarriage if you do get pregnant with it in.
- Safe on bones: still sufficient estrogen levels in blood to protect bones.
- Women who have period issues. With Nexplanon: 22% get no periods, 33% get less than 3 periods per 90 days and 50% of women experience less bleeding. Nexplanon also helps reduce painful periods.

Who is it not for?

- Not as effective in obese individuals.
- Women taking meds that induce your liver enzymes, epilepsy meds, TB meds, HIV meds, or if you are on chemotherapy.
- Should be avoided for women with undiagnosed, abnormal uterine bleeding, liver or breast cancer, a family/personal history of blood clots, SLE with anti-phospholipid antibodies.
- Women who smoke

Possible risks/side-effects

- Headaches (15% chance), acne, breast pain, moodiness, abdominal pain.
- Weight gain: about 1 - 1.5 kg (the same as pill) and 56% gained less than 2.5 kg.
- 7% of women have more than 5 episodes of spotting and 10% removed them due to bleeding issues. For most, bleeding issues improved in the first year. It is very effective for reducing amount of blood loss - 77%
- Insertion issues: Local reactions (redness, blood clot, bruising, pain, swelling). If it is in the wrong position it can lead to nerve damage and numbness.
- Rarely, the implant may be in a vein and migrate into the chest area.
- If it is too superficial it can fall out. The implant can bend or break and it can sometimes get encapsulated by fibrous tissue which could make removal harder. If you cannot feel it in your arm see your doctor and we can x-ray, u/s, CT or MRI as needed to find it.