

The contraceptive implant - Nexplanon



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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This leaflet is written for women who would like a subdermal contraceptive implant (Nexplanon) inserted just under the skin.

A detailed leaflet about the contraceptive implant can be found on the following website:

<https://sexwise.fpa.org.uk/contraception/contraceptive-implant>.

Nexplanon

Nexplanon is a small rod which is inserted just under the skin in a woman's arm which releases a progesterone-like hormone slowly over 3 years. The hormone stops a woman producing an egg which means that it is a very effective form of contraception. In a thousand woman using the implant, less than 1 will become pregnant over 3 years.

The implant is fitted under local anaesthetic, so you should not feel any pain. However you may feel pushing and pulling as the implant is inserted.

Frequently occurring risks at the time of insertion:

- infection and/or bruising to skin
- scarring of skin.

Serious risks at the time of fitting:

- deep insertion - which may be more difficult to remove
- non insertion
- injury to nerve or blood vessel, including migration - very rare - less than 1 in 10,000 insertions.

Side effects of the implant:

- unpredictable bleeding pattern: 1 in 3 - infrequent bleeding, 1 in 4 - prolonged or frequent bleeding, 1 in 4 regular bleeds, 1 in 5 no bleeding
- bleeding pattern may change at any time
- bleeding pattern usually improves over time but may take 6 - 9 months to settle
- hormonal side effects: headaches, breast tenderness, acne (spots)
- although some women report changes in mood, weight and libido (sex drive) there is no evidence that the implant causes these problems.

After your Nexplanon fitting

A pressure bandage will be put on your arm to reduce bruising. It is important that you keep this clean and dry. You can use your arm normally but try not to knock the area. The bandage can be removed after 24 hours. If your arm feels numb, cold or tingly, please loosen the bandage as it is not intended to reduce blood flow through your arm.

You may find that you have some mild bruising and discomfort around the site of the insertion after the local anaesthetic has worn off. It is safe to treat this with our usual pain killers such as paracetamol. Alternatively Ibuprofen can be taken if you have no medical reason, such as asthma or stomach ulcers, to take them.

Some irregular spotting/bleeding is common after the fitting. In the first year, most women will have irregular bleeding. All women are different and some may have heavier bleeds and some will not bleed at all. These changes may be a nuisance but they will not affect how Nexplanon works to prevent pregnancy. If you have any concerns please make an appointment to see us or your GP.

It is important to return for follow-up if the doctor or nurse has advised you to. Otherwise there is no need for a routine check after Nexplanon is fitted. **Unless** any of the following occur:

- the skin looks red and angry around the insertion site
- you cannot feel the implant (use condoms until you are seen)
- you think you may be pregnant
- you are unhappy with any side-effects including the bleeding pattern
- you want to try for a baby.

How soon does it work?

implant fitted before day 5 of menstrual cycle	immediate
implant fitted after day 5 of menstrual cycle	7 days after insertion
changing from another method	as advised by the doctor or nurse

Day 1 is the first day of your period.

How long does the implant last?

The implant is effective for 3 years from the date of fitting. You will be given a record card stating which arm the implant is in and the latest day by which it should be removed. Keep this in a safe place for future reference. Please note, we recommend that your Nexplanon is removed or replaced on, or before, the date on your card.

You will not be automatically recalled or sent reminders.

Removing the Nexplanon

A pressure bandage will be put on your arm to reduce bruising. It is important that you keep this clean and dry. You can use your arm normally but try not to knock the area. The bandage can be removed after 24 hours. If your arm feels numb, cold or tingly, please loosen the bandage as it is not intended to reduce blood flow through your arm. You may see that the doctor or nurse has put some steri-strip ('butterfly') plasters over the small cut. These will come off on their own, either in the bath or shower over the next few days, or you can remove them after about 5 days. Dampen the steri-strips with water and peel off gently. Please return to see us if the skin looks red and angry around the site of removal. If you don't want to get pregnant, you should use an alternative method of contraception immediately.

Problems or questions?

Please contact us on: 01722 425 120 or visit our website at: wiltshiresexualhealth.co.uk