

Information About PROGESTIN-ONLY IMPLANTS

What are progestin-only implants?

It is a form of birth control where a small rod containing the hormone progestin is put under the skin of the arm that lasts for 3 years.

How progestin-only implants work?

Like birth control pills, the implant works by releasing a female hormone in your body. The hormone, progestin, prevents pregnancy in the following ways:

It may:

- Keep the body from releasing an egg that could be fertilized by a man's sperm
- Cause changes in the cervical mucus making it more difficult for a man's sperm to enter the uterus (womb)

How well do progestin-only implants work?

There is less than 1 pregnancy per 100 women each year. This means that it works about as well as having your tubes tied. It is not permanent. It lasts for up to 3 years. You can usually get pregnant soon after the implant is removed.

Why is a progestin-only implant a good choice of birth control for me?

The implant is safe and works very well. You do not have to remember to do anything when you have sex to prevent pregnancy. If you decide later that you want to have a baby, all you have to do is get the implant removed.



What are the possible side effects of progestin-only implants?

The most common side effect for women using the implant is irregular bleeding. It is more common in the first 6 to 12 months of use. You may bleed more or less when you have your period than you did before or you may not have a period at all.

Other side effects you may have include:

- Headaches
- Vaginitis
- Acne
- Nervous feeling, mood swings, or depression
- Breast and stomach pains
- Nausea (feel sick to your stomach)
- Change in appetite
- Weight gain
- Dizziness
- Viral infections

Talk to your doctor or nurse for more information on possible side effects or if you have any questions.

Will I have any problems if I use a progestin-only implant for my birth control method?

There is a slight risk of complications of insertion and/or removal. Some may include:

- Pain
- Irritation
- Bruising
- Scarring
- Infection

Rare complications may include:

- The implant may come out
- Surgery needed for removal

Some medications do decrease the effectiveness of implants such as anti-seizure medications, antibiotics, and herbal remedies. Consult your healthcare provider regarding medications you are currently taking.

The implant may change cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Is there anything I should do to be sure my implant is still in my arm?

It is important that you check the placement of the implant by touching it. Check at least once a month.

If you cannot feel the rod in your arm, return to the clinic to see your doctor, nurse or your clinic.

Information about PROGESTIN-ONLY IMPLANTS, continued

You should not use a progestin-only implant if:

- You are pregnant or think you might be
- You have bleeding from your vagina and do not know why
- You have breast cancer
- You have liver disease or cancer
- You have ever had blood clots, heart attack or stroke
- You have any allergies to any part of the implant

Are there warning signs I need to watch for?

- Sharp chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Very painful headaches
- Heavy bleeding
- Depression
- Severe abdominal pain, swelling or tenderness
- Sudden blindness
- Yellowing of skin or whites of eyes
- Persistent calf pain

Changes in your menstrual period:

During the first year you get the implant, you may have changes in your periods.

You may notice:

- Your period may not be regular, or you may not have a period at all
- You may bleed more or less than you did before getting the implant
- You may have spotting or bleeding between periods

If you have a period that is very heavy or that does not stop at any time while you are using the implant, call your doctor, nurse, or clinic right away.

If you skip a period do not worry this is normal! It does mean that your ovaries are in a resting state and are not releasing an egg each month. While your body is resting, there is no need for your body to build up and shed the lining of the uterus (womb) each month, which is your period.

It is extremely unlikely that you can become pregnant while using the progestin-only implant however, if you think you may be pregnant, call the doctor, nurse, or your clinic.

Can I breastfeed my baby if I use a progestin-only implant for birth control?

Yes! Progestin-only methods are preferred if a hormonal method of birth control is used while breastfeeding.

Weight changes:

Users of progestin-only birth control methods may gain weight due to an increased appetite.

Pay close attention to what you eat and exercise regularly.

- Eat less
- Eat small, infrequent meals
- Exercise more: 30 minutes daily
- Drink 8-10 glasses of water daily

Where can I get a progestin-only implant?

You can get the implant at your local health department, a family planning clinic or a doctor's office.

If you are thinking about having your implant removed call your doctor or nurse to talk about birth control!

REMEMBER:

Birth control implants do not protect you against HIV or any other sexually transmitted infections. Use condoms to protect yourself each time you have sex.

If you have any questions, call us at:

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