



Hormonal Implant: Nexplanon

Background.

Hormonal implants are a top tier form of contraception. Nexplanon is the only FDA approved hormonal implant. Nexplanon is a “long-range reversible contraception” option offering continuous contraception for up to three years or until a woman chooses to become pregnant.

The Nexplanon rod is made of a flexible, surgical plastic (roughly the size of a matchstick) that slowly releases progestin, a sex hormone. Nexplanon prevents pregnancy by suppressing ovulation and thickening cervical mucus. Nexplanon delivers the lowest, effective dose of hormone of any hormonal contraceptive on the market. Because the amount of hormone is so low, it does not carry the adverse side effects risks associated with other progestin-only options, such as Depo-Provera injections or the mini-pill.

Starting Nexplanon.

Nexplanon is placed under the skin of the upper arm during an office procedure. (An office visit is required to remove Nexplanon as well.) A consultation and signed a consent is required prior to getting Nexplanon.

You can not use Nexplanon if your are pregnant. Ideally, Nexplanon is placed during the week of your period. The Nexplanon site is numbed prior to insertion. Nexplanon providers are trained and certified to ensure safe and accurate placement of Nexplanon. Large, non-painful bruises are associated with placement.

Nexplanon offers contraceptive coverage after one week. Back-up contraception (condoms or abstinence) is recommended during this time. The injection site should be covered with a dressing until it has healed, about 5-7 days.

Frequently asked questions.

Q: What should I do if I can't feel the Nexplanon rod?

A: Use back-up contraception, and schedule an office appointment.

Q: What if I don't have a period?

A: It is common to have irregular cycles and light irregular spotting. If you do not have a period for 6 weeks, then do a pregnancy test. If a pregnancy test is POSITIVE, you need to schedule an immediate appointment.

Q: How long will it take to become pregnant after Nexplanon is removed ?

A: Pregnancy can occur as early as one week after removal.

Common Side Effects.

Women can expect to have temporary local pain, swelling and bruising at the injection site.

Women can expect their menstrual bleeding to be lighter and irregular. Most women do not feel inconvenienced by this, but about 10% of users will stop using Nexplanon, because of irregular spotting.

Less Common Side Effects.

Headache

Mood Swings

Weight gain

Acne

Transient ovarian cysts

Ectopic pregnancy (rare)

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU EXPERIENCE THESE SYMPTOMS.

Severe abdominal pain.

Heavy unusual bleeding.

Missed period/positive pregnancy test.

Exposure to STD.

Vaginal discharge is foul.