

## Birth Control Implant (Nexplanon)

## UR Medicine Ob/Gyn

**What is it?** A matchstick-sized rod that is inserted into the upper arm to prevent pregnancy, that lasts for up to 3 years at a time.

### **How does it work?**

The rod contains one hormone, a progestin (etonorgestrel). This hormone stops eggs from leaving your ovaries, and makes your cervical mucus thicker. This prevents the sperm from getting to the egg.

### **How effective is the Nexplanon?**

The birth control implant is one of the most effective types of birth control! Less than 1 out of 100 women a year will become pregnant using the implant. It lasts up to three years.

### **How is the Nexplanon placed?**

After taking your history and doing a physical exam, your doctor will use numbing medicine to make the area on the inside of your arm numb. The implant is then placed under the



skin using a device. This only takes about 5 minutes. You will be able to feel the implant underneath your skin. You should keep a bandage over the area for 1-2 days afterward.

Your doctor must remove the implant after three years. If you would like to stop using the implant, your doctor can remove it at any time. If you would like to continue after 3 years, your doctor can place another implant immediately after taking out the first one.

### **What are the benefits of Nexplanon?**

Women like the implant for several reasons, including:

- There is no medication to remember, and nothing to be placed before intercourse
- It is long-lasting—up to 3 years
- You can take use it while breastfeeding
- You can become pregnant easily once it is removed

### **How safe is the Nexplanon?**

The birth control implant is very safe. It is so safe that it can be used in women who have had blood clots, heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes. But all medications have some risks, so talk to your doctor about your other medical conditions and medications. You should not use Nexplanon if you have breast cancer.

If you are found to be pregnant while using Nexplanon, it will not cause abortion, miscarriage, or birth defects.

**Are there any disadvantages to the Nexplanon?**

Most women adjust to the Nexplanon without any problems. Irregular bleeding is the main side effect, especially in the first 6-12 months. For most women, their bleeding will become lighter. 1 in 3 women will stop having periods at all after the first 6-12 months. Other women will have irregular bleeding or spotting between periods. Some women may have occasional heavier periods. *These side effects are normal.*

Serious side effects are rare. Tell your doctor if you have very heavy periods, pain or infection of the insertion site, or if you can't feel the implant.

**How much does it cost?**

Your insurance may cover the entire cost of the implant. The Nexplanon can cost \$400-800 up front, but lasts for 3 years. There are available programs that provide Nexplanon at NO COST if you do not have insurance coverage. Please ask your clinic about them.

For more information, please visit these websites:

[www.larcfirst.com](http://www.larcfirst.com)

[www.choiceproject.wustl.edu](http://www.choiceproject.wustl.edu)