Implanon Information Sheet

What It Is
Implanon is a small plastic rod the size of a matchstick that is inserted under the skin in the upper portion of the arm during a minor office procedure. It is placed using a local anesthetic and then basically injected under the skin. It takes only a few minutes to complete.

How It Works
The progestin hormone in the implant works to suppress an egg from being released every month. It also works by thickening cervical mucus to prevent sperm from making its way through the cervix into the uterus.

Ideal Candidates For Implanon
- Breastfeeding women
- Smokers over the age of 35
- Women with migraine headaches
- Women with high blood pressure
- Women who can’t take estrogen
- Women who would like a long acting reversible form of contraception
- Women who have problems remembering to use other birth control methods

Who Implanon Is Not Appropriate For
- If you think you may be pregnant
- Have history of blood clots in legs, lungs, heart or head
- Unexplained vaginal bleeding
- Liver disease
- Breast cancer
- Allergy to any product in Implanon

Benefits
- No estrogen, latex, or silicone
- Over 99% effective
- Implanon is not visible in the arm
- No need to remember daily, weekly, or monthly birth control
- Effective for 3 years
- Easily reversible with rapid return of fertility

Risks Associated With Implanon
1. Insertion and/or removal complications
   - Pain, irritation, swelling, bruising
Scaring
Infection
Implant breaks for difficult removal
Insertion difficulties
Thick scar tissue formation for difficult removal
Rare expulsion of the implant
Rare need for surgical removal of the implant

2. Ectopic pregnancy
3. Medication reactions – some medications reduce effectiveness of Implanon
4. Ovarian cysts
5. Breast cancer
6. STIs
7. Effectiveness is decreased in women who are overweight

Side Effects
• Irregular and unpredictable bleeding – the most common side effect is a change in your period pattern. The bleeding pattern may be heavy or light with short or long episodes of bleeding. You could also potentially stop bleeding altogether. Time between periods may vary from month to month and spotting can occur between periods.
• Mood swings
• Weight gain
• Headaches
• Acne
• Depression

Major Side Effects
• Blood clots in legs or lungs
• Stroke
• Heart attack
• Liver tumor

Seek immediate medical attention if you have any of the following symptoms:
A – Abdominal pain, severe in nature
C – Chest pain or shortness of breath
H – Headaches, severe in nature
E – Eye problems, blurring, loss of vision, or flashing lights
S – Swelling or pain in the leg, calf or thigh

Also seek attention if you notice:
• Yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes
• Breast lumps
• Heavy vaginal bleeding
• Severe depression

It is important to discuss Implanon with your health care provider if you have any of the following conditions:
1. Diabetes
2. High cholesterol or triglycerides
3. Headaches
4. Seizures  
5. Gallbladder or kidney disease  
6. Depression  
7. High blood pressure  
8. Allergy to anesthetics or antiseptics

**Implanon Insertion**

1. The timing of insertion will depend on whether you are currently using birth control and what method you are currently using. Typical insertion will be done while you are having your period. You will need to use a back-up form of birth control for at least 7 days after insertion.
2. Discomfort may be like feeling a “pinch” when the anesthetic is being injected. Otherwise, a pulling or tugging feeling may be possible.
3. The health care provider will verify placement and you will be instructed to feel placement as well.
4. There may be some minor soreness at the insertion site that shouldn’t last more than a day or two. If you have discomfort longer than that, contact the office.

**Implanon Removal**

1. Removal must be no later than 3 years after the insertion date.
2. It is removed in the office using the same anesthetic as with insertion and a small incision.
3. You may experience some swelling, redness, bruising, and soreness after removal is complete.
4. A plan should be set for a new birth control method when the removal takes place. If requested, another Implanon can be inserted for 3 more years. If the plan is for pregnancy, the return of fertility can be rather quick.

* Final Note: Implanon provides no protection from Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). If you are intimate with more than one long-term partner, it is important to ALWAYS use a condom, male or female, to reduce your risk of being exposed to a STI.