

What is implanon?

Implanon is a contraceptive implant. It comes as a small flexible rod, which is inserted under the skin of the upper arm. It slowly releases etonogestrel (a hormone similar to the hormone progesterone, which is naturally produced by the female body) into the blood stream to prevent pregnancy for up to 3 years.

It is about the size of a match – 4 centimetres long and 2 millimetres wide. Once inserted, it can be felt, but not easily seen.

Insertion or removal of Implanon is carried out under local anaesthetic by doctors trained in the procedure.

How effective is it?

Implanon is 99.9% effective. It is the most effective reversible method of contraception available in Australia.

How does it work?

Implanon works in 3 ways:

1. It stops your ovaries from releasing an egg each month.
2. It also makes the fluid in your cervix thicker, preventing sperm from getting through.
3. It stops an egg from sticking to the inside of your womb.

What are the advantages?

- Implanon is very effective, affordable and easily removed
- It is long acting (lasts for 3 years)
- You don't have to remember to take a pill every day
- Bleeding maybe lighter and less painful, or your periods may stop.
- When Implanon is removed, your body will quickly return to normal.
- It can be used if you are unable to use contraceptive containing oestrogen
- It is not affected if you have diarrhoea or vomiting
- It is safe to use if you are breastfeeding

What are the disadvantages?

- Your bleeding pattern will change and may be unpredictable
- You may experience some short-term pain and bruising in the area where Implanon is inserted
- Implanon does not protect against sexually transmitted infections

What are the side effects?

- All women will notice a change in their bleeding pattern after receiving Implanon
- 25% of women will stop having periods altogether. This is not harmful, but some women do not like this experience.
- Some women may have irregular bleeding which may be frequent or unpredictable.
- Some women will have persistent spotting or bleeding
- Other possible side effects are acne, breast tenderness, a lower sex drive, increased appetite and headaches.

How do I book for an Implanon implant?

You should firstly discuss with your GP about whether Implanon is the best contraceptive option for you.

Let our receptionists know that you require an Implanon, so they can allocate enough time for us to carry out the procedure.

Implanon is best inserted during the first 5 days of your menstrual cycle to ensure you are not pregnant.