

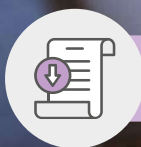
HerLife HerHealth



PRIMARY CARE
WOMEN'S HEALTH FORUM

Implant Fitting/Removal Patient Information Leaflet

WORDS BY DR RAMIYA AL-ALOUSI



For more resources visit
www.pcwhf.co.uk/HLHH

The guidance has been compiled for the Primary Care Women's Health Forum (PCWHF) Her Life Her Health publication. It was correct at the time of going to print. The guidance is for use by healthcare professionals only. Users should independently verify the content or information before relying on it. This information is the opinion of the PCWHF or its contributors/authors and does not necessarily represent those of individual partners. For further information, please contact: hello@pcwhf.co.uk. ► For more resources visit: www.pcwhf.co.uk/HLHH

Implant Fitting/Removal Patient Information Leaflet

The implant is a small plastic rod that is inserted under the skin in your arm and offers over 99% effective and reliable contraception. This lasts for 3 years but the effects are quickly reversible on removal of the implant with no lasting effects on fertility. There is only one device available currently in the UK, your doctor can advise you. It can be fitted immediately after giving birth and after a miscarriage or termination of pregnancy and is safe to use during breast feeding. It can also safely be used as contraception until you are menopausal with the added benefit that it can make heavy periods lighter and less painful.

► To help you decide if the implant is right for you visit www.sexwise.org.uk/contraception/contraceptive-implant

How does the implant work?

Releases the hormone etonogestrel which stops eggs being released from the ovary, thickens cervical mucus and thins the lining of the womb.

What are the main side effects?

Some women report hormonal side effects like acne, mood changes or breast tenderness; this may improve with time.

Changes to your usual bleeding patterns may occur and this could include:

- Your periods may stop
- You may notice that your periods become lighter or less frequent
- Sometimes women have troublesome heavy, prolonged or irregular bleeding

What are the main risks?

- Small risk of infection, bruising and scarring at the site of implant insertion or removal
- Rarely the implant can insert too deeply or can move, but this is minimised by techniques used during fitting.

KEY MESSAGING

1.

The implant provides reliable contraception for 3 years and involves a simple procedure for fitting/removal

2.

Your periods may change with this method

3.

Most women can have the implant but some medications can interact

Implant Fitting/Removal Patient Information Leaflet

IMPLANT FITTING/REMOVAL APPOINTMENT WHAT CAN I EXPECT?



INITIAL DISCUSSION

- To assess if an implant is the best choice for you
- To discuss alternative contraception if the implant is being removed
- You can ask any questions

If you are worried, do not hesitate to discuss your concerns and we will try our best to reassure you



FITTING

- Fitted by a trained doctor or nurse usually into your non dominant arm
- Fitting takes around 5 minutes
- Involves measuring out the correct site just over your triceps muscle, and injecting a small amount of local anaesthetic to the area
- The implant will then be fitted and a small dressing applied to the area
- You will be given an expiry card for your records



REMOVAL

- Removed by a trained doctor or nurse
- Can take longer than fitting, up to 15–20 minutes
- A small amount of local anaesthetic is injected into the area and a small incision is made to remove the device
- You will feel pressure or tugging but this should not be painful
- Steri-stips are usually used and a small dressing will be applied
- Another implant can be refitted if desired in the same site or the other arm
- Occasionally if the implant is deeply sited then you will be referred to a specialist centre for ultrasound guided removal



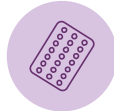
THE IMPLANT RELEASES THE HORMONE ETONOGESTREL WHICH STOPS EGGS BEING RELEASED FROM THE OVARY.

Implant Fitting/Removal Patient Information Leaflet



TIMING

- Can be fitted at any time in the cycle provided that you are not pregnant
- Ideally fitted in the first 5 days of your natural cycle as this ensures no risk of pregnancy
- Can be fitted after using emergency contraception, with a follow-up pregnancy test 3 weeks after unprotected sexual intercourse



SWITCHING CONTRACEPTION

- If already using the combined pill, patch or ring or the progestogen-only pill, implant or injection, then continue using these until the appointment date
- You may be advised to continue these for a short time afterwards too until the implant is fully effective



SUITABILITY

- Most women are medically suitable for an implant fitting
- Speak to your healthcare professional in advance if you have any of the following conditions:
 - any unexplained vaginal bleeding
 - a history of breast cancer or severe liver disease
 - you take certain medications for conditions like epilepsy, HIV or tuberculosis as well as over the counter herbal remedies like St John's Wort as these can make the implant less effective

WHEN IS THE IMPLANT EFFECTIVE?

- Fitted up to day 5 of a natural cycle – immediately
- Fitted after day 5 of a natural cycle – 7 days' extra precautions needed
- Up to day 21 after giving birth, or up to 5 days after a miscarriage or abortion – immediately (otherwise 7 days' extra precautions needed)
- If refitted before your current implant expires, then the new implant is effective immediately

What should I expect after my implant fitting/removal?

After fitting or removal, your arm may feel sore or bruised for the first few days; simple painkillers can help if needed. Keep the dressing dry and on for the first 3 days.

AFTER IMPLANT FITTING

- You will be shown how to feel for the implant's position in your arm; if at any point you cannot feel the implant use alternative contraception and speak to your healthcare professional
- If you develop troublesome vaginal bleeding seek medical advice as there are medications that can help
- Fitting after using emergency contraception – remember to take a pregnancy test 3 weeks after the last episode of unprotected intercourse and notify your healthcare team if the result is positive

AFTER IMPLANT REMOVAL

- If you wish to try for a baby remember to take folic acid and follow general pre-conception advice such as stopping smoking and maintaining a healthy lifestyle
▶ www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/trying-for-a-baby/planning-your-pregnancy/
- If you want to avoid pregnancy, start another method immediately or ideally begin this new method before implant removal ◊

▶ For more aftercare advice please visit this link www.pcwhf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/PCWHF-Resources_contraceptive-implant.pdf