

FACT SHEET: PROGESTIN IMPLANT

How does the implant help me?

- The implant is an estrogen-free option.
- If you don't like the implant or you decide to get pregnant, your health care provider can remove the implant before 3 years have passed.
- The implant is safe and effective birth control which protects from pregnancy for 3 years. If you want to use it longer, you can get a new implant after 3 years. The implant has no effect on your ability to get pregnant in the future after you have it removed.

How does the implant work?

- The progestin implant is a thin plastic tube about the size of a paper matchstick. A health care provider inserts it under the skin of your upper arm.
- It works mainly by making the mucus in your cervix too thick for sperm to pass through. If sperm cannot reach the egg, you cannot get pregnant.
- No method of birth control is 100% effective. The implant is over 99% effective.

How will I feel using the implant?

- The implant causes periods to change. Some women have no periods at all. Most women have off-and-on spotting. Spotting may last until you have the implant removed. This is normal.
- A few women have: mood changes, weight gain, headache, acne, and/or skin changes in the upper arm.
- Most side effects improve after the first few months of use.

What hormones will NOT do:

Protect you from sexually transmitted infection, heartbreak, or having inappropriate postings put up about you on twitter™ and facebook™. It is YOUR responsibility to make appropriate sexual decisions and to recognize and avoid unhealthy relationships.

If you choose to touch naked people...
USE CONDOMS EVERYTIME
you have any kind of sexual contact

Will it make me gain weight?

- Birth control hormones rarely cause significant weight gain. Most young women begin using birth control at a time when they would be gaining a small amount of weight anyway. Seniors are bigger than freshman—they're supposed to be; a woman's weight typically doesn't stabilize until her early 20's.

Does the implant have risks?

- The implant is very safe. If you have any of the following symptoms within the first week after insertion, see your health care provider: Redness, warmth, or drainage from your arm. Fever (>101°F)
- If you have any of the following symptoms at any time while you have the implant, see your health care provider: feeling pregnant (breast pain, nausea), positive home pregnancy test

Does the implant have risks?

The implant is very safe. Serious problems are rare. If you have any of the symptoms below, call your health provider. These may be signs of a blood clot:

- A Abdominal pain (severe)
- C Chest pain or shortness of breath (severe)
- H Headaches which are severe (especially if different from your prior headache pattern)
- E Eye problems such as blurring or double vision
- S Severe depression
- S Swelling (usually painless) in one arm or leg (rarely: severe leg pain, fullness or "cord" behind knee)

How do I minimize the risk of blood clots?

- Stay well hydrated, especially when travelling.
- Walk around (or at least stretch your legs) about every 2 hours when travelling or sitting for a long time (e.g. car or plane trips).
- Notify your healthcare provider about adjusting your medicine if you have an injury or surgery requiring prolonged bed rest or use of leg cast or boot.

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How is the implant inserted?

- Your physician will recommend when to schedule the insertion procedure based on your menstrual cycle and the kind of birth control you are currently using. Do not stop your current birth control until advised by your physician.
- The actual insertion takes a few minutes. However, plan on about a 30-45 minute appointment for paperwork, preparation time, etc.
- After numbing your skin, a health care provider inserts the implant under the skin of your upper arm. This takes a few minutes. It is done in the office or clinic.
- GTW recommends condoms for birth control backup for the first 7 days and on-going for disease protection.
- Minors (patients under 18 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian for the insertion procedure.

What happens after the implant is inserted?

- The first follow-up is 2 weeks after the insertion procedure to ensure the insertion site has healed appropriately.
- The second follow-up is 2 months later (10 weeks after insertion) to screen for any problems or concerns you may be experiencing and ensure that you are comfortable with how the implant is working for you.

Can people see the implant in my arm?

- Most implants cannot be seen, but you can feel it if you touch the skin over the implant.

How is the implant removed?

- Removal of the implant requires a minor surgical procedure in the office or clinic. After numbing your skin, a health care provider makes a small incision (2mm) in your arm where the implant is located and removes the implant.

What is the cost for the implant? How do I schedule the procedure?

- GTW will submit the request to CVS/Caremark.
- CVS/Caremark will contact your insurance company to verify your coverage and payment information based on your currently available insurance information.
- GTW will contact you with the insurance coverage verification so you can make an informed decision about the potential costs to you. As always, this is not a guarantee of coverage, but is based on the information provided by the insurance company at the time of verification.
- If you decide to have the implant inserted, schedule your insertion procedure with GTW. Continue your current form of birth control until the insertion procedure.