

# Implantable Rods Fact Sheet

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

- ❖ **What are** implantable rods?
- ❖ How do I **use** it?  
How do I **get** it?
- ❖ How **effective** is it?
- ❖ **Advantages** of implants
- ❖ **Drawbacks** of implants

## SOURCES:

Office on Women's Health

- ❖ [Girlshealth.gov](http://girlshealth.gov): [Types of Birth Control](#)
- ❖ [Birth Control Methods: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❖ [Unintended Pregnancy Prevention: Contraception](#)

Food and Drug Administration

- ❖ [Birth Control Guide](#)

### What are implantable rods?

An implantable rod, or implant, is a thin plastic rod (about the size of a matchstick) that is placed under the skin of the upper arm. The implant releases a hormone found in birth control pills, progestin, that prevents pregnancy by causing the cervical mucus to thicken, which blocks sperm from meeting with and fertilizing an egg. It also works by keeping the ovaries from releasing eggs.



### How do I use it?

Placing the rod under the skin of the arm is a simple procedure done by a health care provider. It is done in the office and takes only a few minutes. It may take a week for the implant to begin working, so ask if you need to use a back-up method of birth control (like a condom) in the meantime.

The implant will work well in preventing pregnancy for three years. A health care provider can easily remove the old implant and put a new one in place when at the right time. The rod can also be taken out anytime if you decide you want to get pregnant.

- ❖ It is common for women to have bleeding (especially in the first few months) and changes to their periods with an implant. Some women may have heavier periods, but for most women, periods will become lighter or stop altogether.
- ❖ Less often, women who have an implant may experience acne, weight gain, mood changes, headaches, and breast tenderness. Ask your health care provider what to expect, and what types of symptoms (like severe discomfort) you should let them know about.



### How effective is it?

Of 100 women using implants, only about one will become pregnant. An implant is effective in preventing pregnancy for three years.

### How do I get it?

An implant can only be put under the skin of your arm by a health care professional. To search for a family planning clinic near you, go to <http://www.opaclearinghouse.org/search/>.





### Advantages of implants

- ❖ Implants do not require the consent of the female's partner
- ❖ They are safe and effective in preventing pregnancy
- ❖ Implants work for three years
- ❖ If a woman wants to become pregnant it is very easy for a health care provider to remove the implant



### Drawbacks of implants

- ❖ Requires a clinic visit
- ❖ Provides no protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- ❖ May cause bleeding or changes to your period. Some women gain weight or have stomach aches or headaches



### Quick Facts

#### Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy

- ❖ Of 100 women using implants, about 1 will become pregnant

#### Use

- ❖ Health care provider inserts a single rod under the skin of the upper arm

#### STI Protection

- ❖ No

#### Clinic Visit Required

- ❖ Yes, only available through a health care provider

