

sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

factoid

Dealing with exam time stress? An instant cure for most stress is 30 minutes of brisk walking or other aerobic exercises.

Q. I'm having a difficult time keeping up with my daily birth control pills. I have heard of Implanon, and I'm wondering how it works and if it's as effective as my birth control pills?

A. A daily birth control method is not fit for everyone. It can be a hassle to take the pill at the same time everyday, find the pills, and even refill them in time. However, different types of birth control methods that aren't used daily might seem wacky and intimidating at first. One fairly new method that is becoming popular is called Implanon.

Implanon is a small, thin rod (smaller than a matchstick) inserted on the inner side of a women's upper arm. What's unique about this device is that it can last for up to 3 years and is over 99% effective! Implanon is a progestin-only method that stops the release of eggs from your ovaries, changes the mucus in your cervix (making it more difficult for sperm to travel), and changes the lining in your uterus.

Placement of Implanon requires a minor surgical procedure performed in the office by your healthcare provider. They use a local anesthetic and a needle device to insert the rod. The entire procedure takes only a few minutes. To remove Implanon, your healthcare provider will make a minor incision where the rod was placed. Sometimes minor bruises, swelling, bleeding, or pain may occur.

There are many benefits to using Implanon, the first being its 99% effectiveness. The rod is also very discreet. The only person who will know it is there is you and your healthcare provider. This method is also reversible. Once removed, fertility quickly returns. If you do not wish to get pregnant after Implanon is removed, start using an alternative birth control method right away.

As with any birth control method there may be side effects. Implanon can cause irregular bleeding. Some serious and rare side effects include ectopic pregnancy, blood clots, breast cancer, high blood pressure, interactions with other medicines, and ovarian cysts. It is important to discuss any birth control method with your healthcare provider to make sure that it is right for you.

To find a provider who is trained to insert Implanon and to learn more information about the device, go to www.implanon-usa.com. If you have any questions about birth control methods, call Women's Health of Campus Health at 621-6512.

Guest Columnist: Shelly Splittberger, Health Education Intern



Have a question? Send it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu

SexTalk is written by Lee Ann Hamilton, M.A., CHES and David Salafsky, MPH, health educators at The University of Arizona Campus Health Service.

