



# Contraceptive Implants – a safe and effective choice

## 1. What is an implant?

A subdermal implant is a small plastic rod (matchstick size) that is placed under the skin of the upper arm.

## 2. Why are implants used?

A subdermal implant is used as a contraceptive/family planning method which is very safe and almost 100% effective. It helps a woman to decide when she wants to be pregnant so that each baby is a planned and wanted baby.

## 3. How does it work?

An implant contains progestogen which is released into the body and stops the egg leaving the ovary and it also thickens the mucus in the cervix so the sperm cannot penetrate. It does not contain oestrogen so most women can use it even if they are breastfeeding. It is an alternative lower dose hormonal long-acting contraceptive method.

## 4. How long does an implant last?

A single rod implant is used for 3 years and a two rod implant for 5 years.

## 5. What are the side effects?

It is common for there to be changes in a woman's menstruation such as no bleeding, longer bleeding, light bleeding or bleeding that is not regular. She can also have headaches, nausea, dizziness, breast tenderness, mood changes etc. But these side effects are far less than with the progestogen-only injections.

## 6. Who can insert the implant?

A trained health care provider (doctor or nurse) can fit and remove implants.

## 7. How long will it take after removal to be fertile?

The woman will return to the level of fertility she had before the implant immediately after its removal.

## 8. Does the implant protect the woman against STIs and HIV?

No, it does not. The woman must make use of a condom (male or female) to protect herself against STIs and HIV

## 9. At what age can a woman use an implant?

It can be used from the first menstruation till menopause.

**Implants are safe and effective. But there are other contraceptives such as the pill, IUD, injections. Discuss with your health worker which contraceptive suits your lifestyle.**