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**The Women's Group  
of Northwestern**  
OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

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## NEXPLANON

### What is Nexplanon?

Nexplanon is a form of birth control. It is a small, plastic rod about the size of a matchstick that is inserted under the skin of your upper arm. The implant releases a hormone called progestin, which prevents ovulation. It also thickens the mucus in your vagina to prevent sperm from entering your uterus.

### What is Nexplanon used for?

Nexplanon protects against pregnancy for up to 3 years. Although it can stay in place for up to 3 years, it may be removed at any time. Once a Nexplanon is removed, it is possible for you to get pregnant very soon after removal. If you wish, another Nexplanon can be inserted when you get a current one removed.

### What happens during the procedure?

Your provider will clean your arm with antiseptic solution and then inject some numbing medicine. She will then insert the Nexplanon under your skin on the inside of your upper arm. You may feel some pressure or mild discomfort during the procedure. The procedure only takes about 10 minutes.

To remove Nexplanon, your provider will clean and numb your arm. She will make a small incision near the site of the implant and then locate and remove the implant. A new Nexplanon can be inserted at this time. Nexplanon must be removed on or before the 3-year mark.

### What are the risks?

- Bruising and swelling where the Nexplanon was placed
- Pain or discomfort at the site of placement
- Scarring of the skin
- A small risk of infection
- Difficulty retrieving the Nexplanon at time of removal

### What should I do to prepare for the procedure?

- **Do not have unprotected sex for 2 weeks before you get the Nexplanon placed.**
- Come to your appointment with a full bladder so you can take a pregnancy test before the procedure

**What should I expect after the procedure?**

You will be able to drive yourself home after this procedure.

Your provider will place a bandage over the insertion site, which may be removed at the end of the day.

You may experience pain, irritation, or bruising at the injection site. You may take an over-the-counter (OTC) pain reliever, like Advil or Tylenol.

**You will need to abstain from sex or use a back-up method, like a condom, for 7 days after the procedure.**

This gives the implant time to start working properly.

- If you were taking a different form of birth control before getting Nexplanon you can continue to take it for the 7 days.
- **Nexplanon, and other contraceptives, do not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).** Only condoms can protect against STIs.

You may experience irregular menstrual bleeding, especially for the first few months after insertion. Some patients eventually have no menstrual bleeding.

**Call your provider if you experience:**

- Bleeding that fills a pad or more in an hour
- Pain that is not relieved with an OTC pain reliever
- Redness, drainage or a large amount of swelling at the injection site
- Fever greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Any signs of pregnancy

Office number: **312.440.3810**, Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 4:30PM

- For emergencies after hours, calling this number will connect you to the operator, who will page the OBGYN physician on call.