

Advice regarding the Removal of a deep contraceptive implant

Who is it for?

You have been referred to this service for removal of your contraceptive implant, either because it has been assessed as difficult to remove or because it has not been possible to identify the implant within your arm.

You should allow at least 1 hour for this appointment.

The procedure may involve using an ultrasound machine (similar to the one used when scanning pregnant women) to try and identify where the implant is within the arm.

Once the doctor is satisfied that the implant can be seen and removed, a small amount of local anaesthetic is injected into the skin to numb the area before making a small incision (usually less than 2cm long).

The implant is usually placed just under the skin and can be close to some nerves and blood vessels within the arm. Great care is taken in removing the implant and damage to any of these nerves or blood vessels whilst possible, is extremely rare.

A pressure bandage will be put on your arm to reduce bruising. It is important that you keep this clean and dry. You can use your arm normally but try not to knock the area. The bandage can be removed after 72 hours. If your arm feels numb, cold or tingly, please loosen the bandage as it is not intended to reduce blood flow through your arm.

The wound may be closed using either using steristrips (butterfly stitches) [which should come off on their own after about 5 days], traditional stitches [which will need to be removed in 7 days time] or dissolvable stitches [which will disappear over the next 7-10 days].

There is often some bruising around the wound and you will have a small scar once this has healed.

Infection at the wound site is uncommon but if the area becomes very red, hot, swollen or painful or if there is any discharge from the wound, or if you have any concerns, you should seek medical advice from your GP or sexual health clinic.

There is a risk that we may not be able to identify the implant on ultrasound or fail to remove it even if it can be seen on the ultrasound scan. You may require a referral to a different specialist for removal in this situation.

If you don't want to become pregnant, you should start to use an alternative method of contraception immediately.

If you have any problems or questions or you are at all worried about anything, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Please attend your local sexual health clinic or telephone 0300 300 2016

Clinic times are available from our website: www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk

Your GP should also be able to give you advice.