

# Advice for Women Requesting an **Implant Insertion** or **Implant Exchange**

## **TIMING OF YOUR APPOINTMENT:**

We will need to ensure you are not at risk of pregnancy when we fit or exchange your implant. This can be done by one of the ways described below:

### **For a new implant:**

- No unprotected sexual intercourse since your last period
- A reliable method of contraception has been used consistently and correctly since your last period
- You are within the first 5 days of a normal period
- You are within the first 5 days after a termination or miscarriage
- You have had a baby and are within the first 21 days since giving birth or you have not yet resumed sexual intercourse since giving birth.
- You are under 6 months post-natal, fully breast feeding night and day with no use of supplements (Also giving your baby formula milk or have started weaning) and your periods have not yet returned

### **For an implant exchange:**

- If you are having an implant exchanged and your current implant is out of date (over 3 years use) we ask you to use another method of contraception e.g. pill or condom or abstain from sexual intercourse for 3 weeks before your appointment. You may be requested to perform a urine pregnancy test in clinic before your implant exchange to ensure you are not pregnant

**Please carefully review this list to ensure you meet one of the criteria. If there is any risk of pregnancy at the time of your appointment we will not be able to fit or exchange your implant.**

## **WHAT TO EXPECT WITH THE INSERTION PROCEDURE:**

Having an implant inserted is a very quick and easy procedure.

We ask you to lie down with your arm stretched out or bent at the elbow resting on a pillow/couch.

Often a small mark will be made at the insertion site and the area around this mark will be cleaned.

We use an injection of numbing agent (local anaesthetic) which can sting briefly as its being administered. The injection is the only mild discomfort you should experience.

We wait a short while and will test to ensure the local anaesthetic has numbed that part of the arm before proceeding with fitting the implant. Alternatively, some clinicians may apply a topical numbing spray immediately to the area before proceeding to insertion.

Putting in the implant is very quick and normally takes less than a minute.

As the local anaesthetic removes the sensation of pain but not touch, women can often feel slight pressure as the implant goes in but this should not be painful.

The clinician will assist you to feel for the implant and confirm its presence in your arm with them before dressing the wound and applying a pressure bandage around the top of your arm. The bandage is used to help minimise bruising and should be left in place for the first 24 hours.

As soon as the procedure is finished you can return to your normal activities; this includes driving.

When the anaesthetic wears off your arm may feel slightly tender. You can take your normal pain relief if required.

We ask you avoid strenuous activity with the arm for the first 24 hours to reduce the risk of excessive pain or bruising.

You can take the bandage off after 24 hours. It is normal to see a small amount of bruising at or around the site of insertion. Cover the wound with a waterproof plaster or equivalent waterproof dressing and keep the wound clean and dry for a total of 5 days.

You can shower or bathe as normal keeping the arm dry. Wrapping the area with a clean plastic bag or cling film will help prevent the dressing getting wet.


If you have had paper sutures (also known as steristrips) applied to the wound please remove these after 5 days. Take care to gently lift both ends of the paper sutures to the direction of the centre of the wound before removing them. If they do not peel off easily soaking them with warm water aids their removal.

The wound should be healed and the bruising gone after about 7-10 days.

#### THE EXCHANGE PROCEDURE:

- This is a very similar experience with the only discomfort being for the brief time the local anaesthetic injection is being administered
- Removing an implant can take a few minutes
- After we have checked the area has gone numb we make a small cut (less than 0.5cm) through which we remove the implant
- Whilst the area is numb expect to feel touching but this should not be painful. We can offer further local anaesthetic if it's needed
- If we are replacing the implant (an exchange) we can use the same cut to put the new implant in. If, however, you have had a number of implants in the same site we may advise to change the implant site to the other arm. This is to prevent thickened scar tissue developing
- The rest of the procedure and aftercare will be as for fitting with paper sutures and a pressure dressing being applied to the wound (see above)

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If you have any concerns following your procedure please call the **Suffolk Sexual Health Service** central booking number on  **0300 303 9982** to book an implant review appointment.

Please refer to the Suffolk Sexual Health Service website for further information including clinic locations and opening times:  [suffolksexualhealthservice.org.uk](https://suffolksexualhealthservice.org.uk)