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## on Drugs and Therapeutics

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### IN BRIEF

#### Extended Duration of Use for *Nexplanon*

*Nexplanon*, a single-rod contraceptive implant containing the progestin etonogestrel, has now been approved for prevention of pregnancy for up to 5 years. It was previously approved for up to 3 years of use.<sup>1</sup>

**A CLINICAL STUDY** — FDA approval of the extended duration of use was based on the results of an unpublished single-arm trial (summarized in the manufacturer's press release) that evaluated the efficacy of *Nexplanon* from years 3 to 5 in 399 women 18-35 years old (~40% of patients had a BMI  $\geq 30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>). No new pregnancies were reported from year 3 to year 5.<sup>2,3</sup>

**THE IMPLANT** — *Nexplanon* is one of the most effective reversible contraceptive methods available. It provides long-term contraception and requires no adherence other than an office visit for replacement before the end of the fifth year. Fertility returns rapidly after removal. Irregular bleeding is common.

*Nexplanon* is placed under the skin on the inside of the nondominant upper arm. After insertion, it releases 60-75 mcg/day of etonogestrel initially, 30-40 mcg/day by the end of the second year, 25-30 mcg/day by the end of the third year, and 15-20 mcg/day by the end of the fifth year.

**REMS PROGRAM** — *Nexplanon* will now only be available through a Risk Mitigation Strategy (REMS) program designed to prevent improper insertion and removal of the implant. ■

1. Choice of contraceptives. *Med Lett Drugs Ther* 2023; 65:73.
2. Organon. Organon announces US Food and Drug Administration approval of supplemental new drug application extending duration of use of *Nexplanon* (etonogestrel implant) 68 mg radiopaque. January 16, 2026. Available at: <https://bit.ly/4keYdVH>. Accessed February 11, 2026.
3. NIH. A study to assess contraceptive efficacy and safety of etonogestrel (ENG) implant beyond 3 years of use (MK-8415-060). NCT04626596. Available at: <https://bit.ly/4tgaihp>. Accessed February 11, 2026.

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