

## LEVONORGESTREL (implant)

*lee-voe-nor-jes-trel*

### What does it do?

*Levonorgestrel* is used to prevent pregnancy.

### Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have breast cancer.

### How is it given?

Two implants are inserted under the skin in your upper arm by a health professional. They can stay in place for a maximum of 5 years.

Visit the Family Planning website for more information:

[www.familyplanning.org.nz/advice/contraception/contraceptive-implant](http://www.familyplanning.org.nz/advice/contraception/contraceptive-implant)

[www.familyplanning.org.nz/advice/contraception/implant-insertion-instructions](http://www.familyplanning.org.nz/advice/contraception/implant-insertion-instructions)

### Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort) or recreational drugs.

### What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects  | Recommended action   |
|---|--|
| Changes in periods  | Irregular bleeding is common in the first 3-6 months. This is not harmful and usually improves with time. After this, some women will not have any periods at all. |
| Mood changes, headache<br>Acne<br>Weight gain<br>Sore breasts<br>Stomach upset<br>Bleeding or itching at implant site | Tell your doctor if troublesome  |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

### Other information:

- Keep the implant area dry for a few days after it is inserted and follow your doctor's instructions on when to remove the dressing and/or bandage.
- See your doctor if you cannot feel your implant, if you notice any changes around your implant, or if you become pregnant.
- Your implant does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.
- You can ask to have your implant removed at any time. This must be done by your health professional – do not remove it yourself. The implant can be hard to remove in a small number of women; you may need more than one visit to the clinic if this is the case.
- You can get pregnant as soon as your implant is removed.