

Long- acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC)

Long-acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) devices are birth control methods that provides effective contraceptive for an extended period of time. You do not have to think about contraception on a daily basis or every time you have sex, as with the oral contraceptive pills or condoms. Long acting reversible contraceptive is highly effective in preventing unintended pregnancies and can be stopped if you decide you want to get pregnant.

Long-acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) includes the following:

- **Implants** – these are inserted under the skin and lasts up to 3 years
- **Intrauterine device** – these are inserted into the womb and lasts for 5-10 years before they need replacing
- **Contraceptive injection**- these work up to 12 weeks before being repeated.

	Copper IUD	IUS	Progesterone-only injection	Implant(Nexplanon)
What is it?	A small plastic and copper device which is inserted into the womb	A small plastic device which is inserted into the womb and slowly releases progesterogen	An injection that slowly releases progesterogen	A small, flexible rod inserted under the skin that slowly releases progesterogen
How does it work?	Prevents fertilization and inhibits implantation of egg in the womb	Mainly prevents implantation of egg and sometimes prevents fertilization	Prevents ovulation	Prevents ovulation
How long does it last?	5-10 years depending on type	5 years	Repeat injection every 8-12 weeks depending on type	3 years
Chances of getting pregnant	Less than 2% of women over a 5 year period	Less than 1% of women over a 5 year` period	Less than 0.4% over a 2 year period	Less than 0.1% of women over 3 year period
Could it affect chances of getting pregnant in the future	No	No	It may take up to a year for fertility to return to normal	No
Effect on period?	Periods may become heavier or more painful	For the first 6 months there may be irregular bleeding or spotting	Periods often stop, but some women experience irregular or persistent	Period pains may improve. Periods may stop, or become longer or irregular until removal of implant
Unwanted effects?	Risk of ectopic pregnancy is higher if a women falls pregnant while using an IUD	Risk of ectopic pregnancy is higher if a women falls pregnant while using an IUD May develop acne	May gain weight (2-3kg over a years) May cause thinning of the bones which is reversible on stopping	May develop acne
Checks needed whilst using LARC	Needs check-up after first period after insertion. Regularly feel for threads of IUD to ensure it is still in place. See doctor/nurse if you experience any problem or want to have it removed.	Needs check-up after first period after insertion. Regularly feel for threads of IUD to ensure it is still in place. See doctor/nurse if you experience any problem or want to have it removed.	None – you need to regularly receive repeat injection. See your doctor or nurse if you experience any problems related to the injection.	None. See your doctor or nurse if you experience any problems related to the implant, want to stop using it or have it removed.