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Contraceptive Implanon: Why do GPs get asked to remove it early?

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Contraceptive Implanon: Why do GPs get asked to remove it early?

Abstract

Nineteen women aged 18 to 39 years of age from four Coast City Country GP Training practices were interviewed regarding their experiences with Implanon and the reasons for early removal. All participants were in relationships and approximately half had children.

Keywords

get, do, why, implanon:, asked, contraceptive, remove, early?, gps

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About ISPRN

The Illawarra and Southern Practice Research Network (ISPRN) is a partnership between the University of Wollongong's Graduate School of Medicine (GSM) and the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI).

ISPRN supports individual investigator projects and provides a framework for other researchers to partner with GP practices in research.

About IHMRI

IHMRI is an independent health and medical research institute based on the University of Wollongong campus.

IHMRI's vision — *excellence and innovation in health and medical research supporting better health services leading to a healthier Illawarra community* — encapsulates our belief that by linking academic and clinician researchers around common health and medical issues, research findings can be rapidly translated into improved clinical practice in the Illawarra region and beyond.



Thank you to all of the patients and staff who were involved in this study

Key researchers

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Project Funding

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Any questions?

If you have any further queries regarding this project, please contact:

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Contraceptive Implanon

Why do GPs get asked to remove it early?



IHMRI is a joint initiative of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District and the University of Wollongong

UOW CRICOS Provider No: 00102E



Nineteen women aged 18 to 39 years of age from four Coast City Country GP Training practices were interviewed regarding their experiences with Implanon and the reasons for early removal. All participants were in relationships and approximately half had children.

Influence on choice of contraception

The main influence of choosing Implanon was that it was seen to be convenient.

"Yeah, it was kind of that method and the way that I wouldn't have to keep going back and getting scripts as well. I just thought that would be an easier method to have that put in rather than the pill"

– Participant 11, aged 18

It was seen as an advantageous contraception because patients didn't have to remember to take an oral contraceptive pill every day and it appeared to provide long-term cover.

A minority of patients had sought information from friends, family and the internet. It seemed that, because of this information, these patients saw the doctor for the purpose of requesting the Implanon with the discussion with the GP influencing their final decision.

From their discussion with the GP, participants recalled discussing potential side-effects, other contraception options as well as the insertion and removal of the device.

Participants also reported that they felt it was important to talk about the side-effects together:

"She basically went through the pamphlet with me and answered any other questions that I had"

– Participant 12, aged 19

It appeared that potential bleeding was the main side-effect discussed by GPs.

A number of patients did not recall being offered other longer-term options of contraception.

Influence on removal of contraception

Bleeding side-effects were the main cause for removal of the contraceptive device.

"There wasn't really any gap where I didn't have the spotting and that's the main reason I did get it taken out...."

– Participant 4, aged 28

Interestingly, mood swings and weight gain were also common factors for removal. Patients felt they hadn't been as well informed about these side-effects.

Most women who tried Implanon for the second time advised they had no problems with their first Implanon but were having side-effects with their second.

Unpredictable bleeding, changes in mood, as well as painful intercourse affected some women's relationships with their partners.

"I didn't like it. I experienced about six weeks of not heavy but constant bleeding, enough to disrupt my lifestyle, and after six weeks, mood swings were crazy and I just wanted it out"

– Participant 2, aged 20

Almost all of the patients found their side-effects resolved within months of Implanon removal.

Women would be less likely to remove their Implanon early if they were made aware of potential side-effects.

Conclusions and recommendations

It is important for you, as a patient, to discuss different contraception options and their corresponding side-effects with your GP.

This study found that General Practitioners have a great influence on the contraceptive choices women make.



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