

# The Medical Letter®

## On Drugs and Therapeutics

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## IN BRIEF

### Etonogestrel (*Nexplanon*) Contraceptive Implant

*Nexplanon* (Merck), a modified version of the contraceptive implant *Implanon* (Merck), is now available in the US. *Nexplanon* contains 68 mg of the progestin etonogestrel and is bioequivalent to *Implanon*. Both products are single-rod subdermal contraceptives implanted into the inside of the upper arm; both provide reversible effective contraception for up to 3 years.<sup>1</sup> *Nexplanon* has a redesigned preloaded applicator intended to make insertion easier and reduce the risk of improperly placed devices. Proper placement is necessary to ensure adequate contraceptive efficacy and to facilitate future removal of the implant. Unlike *Implanon*, *Nexplanon* is radiopaque (contains barium sulfate) and can be located using an X-ray or CT scan when the device is not palpable. Providers should receive training before inserting or removing *Nexplanon*. *Nexplanon* will replace *Implanon* once all registered providers have completed the training program. The wholesale acquisition cost of a single *Nexplanon* implant is \$659.42.<sup>2</sup>

1. A new progestin implant (Implanon) for long-term contraception. *Med Lett Drugs Ther* 2006; 48:83.
2. Wholesale acquisition cost (WAC) for one implant (administration cost not included). Source: PricePointRx™. Reprinted with permission by FDB (First Databank, Inc.). All rights reserved. ©2012. <http://www.firstdatabank.com/support/drug-pricing-policy.aspx>. Accessed January 26, 2012.

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