

Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC):

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

Long-acting reversible contraceptive include the following:

- Implants – these are inserted under the skin and last for up to 3 years
- Intrauterine devices – these are inserted into the womb and last for 5 to 10 years
- Injections – these work up to 12 weeks before being repeated

	Copper IUDs	IUS (Jaydess / Mirena)	Progesterone-only injections	Implants (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 wome and slowly releases progestogen	An injection that slowly releases progestogen	A small, flexible rod inserted under the skin that slowly releases progestogen
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	3-5 years depending on type	Repeat injections every 12 weeks	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 a 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
Effects on periods?	Periods may become heavier or more painful	For the first 6 months there may be irregular bleeding or spotting. Periods often become less frequent or stop after a year	Periods often stop, but some women experience irregular or persistent bleeding	Period pains may improve. Periods may stop, or become longer or irregular
Unwanted effects?	Risk of ectopic pregnancy is higher if a woman falls pregnant (although chance of pregnancy low)	Risk of ectopic pregnancy is higher if a woman falls pregnant (although chance of pregnancy low) May develop acne	May gain weight (2-3kg over a year) May cause thinning of the bones which is reversible on stopping	May develop acne