

## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Contraception with Levonorgestrel Subdermal Implants (Norplant<sup>R</sup>) in Benin-City, Nigeria: A 12-year Review

*Aisien, A.O.*

### Abstract

The case notes of 377 clients who accepted Norplant out of 11961 acceptors of family planning methods in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology University of Benin Teaching Hospital, between January 1985 and December 1996 were retrieved and analysed at the end of 2004, for socio-demographic characteristics of the clients, side effects and complications reported and reasons for discontinuation in relation to duration of use. The daily register of the acceptors were analysed for new acceptors of other methods during the same period and confirmed with their case notes. The acceptance incidence of Norplant was 3.2%. The mean age and parity of the acceptors were  $32.2 \pm 4.5$  years and  $3.9 \pm 1.8$  respectively. The duration of use ranged between 6 months and 13 years. 65% of the acceptors reported menstrual abnormalities. 48% of them reported reduced bleeding pattern, while 7.5% (25) discontinued method under 4 years of use because of increased bleeding episodes. Other side effects reported were headache 6%, weight gain 3%, mastalgia 1.8%, decreased libido 1.8%, abdominal pain 1.5% and hypertension 1.2%. 20.4% (68) discontinued the use under 4 years because of desire to have another baby. 38.6% (129) had implants removed at 5 years, while 20.1% (67) continued the use for 6-13 years before removal and replacement with another set. Husband's request for removal constituted 7.2% (24). The effectiveness was 100% as no pregnancy was reported during the study period. The continuation rate at 5 years was 58.7%. 43 clients were however lost to follow up. Norplant was found to be an effective and acceptable method of long-term reversible contraception with minimal side effects. The low incidence was attributed to the fact that the implants were donor driven and not included in the country contraceptive logistic system. Norplant acceptors who continued the use after 5 years did so, because they enjoyed it and did not want to part with them without replacement of new sets.

**Keywords:** Norplant<sup>R</sup>, Acceptability, Place amongst Other Family Planning Methods.