



# The IPPF Directory of Hormonal Contraceptives

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO FAMILY PLANNING INCLUDES GIVING WOMEN A CHOICE OF CONTRACEPTIVES

THE WORLD'S ONLY ONE-STOP ONLINE RESOURCE FOR HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVE INFORMATION

There are just seven types of hormonal contraceptives. But they come in hundreds of forms: different formulations, different packaging, different brands, different manufacturers, different levels of availability. And all these differences are spread across 200 countries. For clinicians around the world, making the right choice is highly complex.

Luckily, there is a single source that provides information on all these drugs. It is called the Directory of Hormonal Contraceptives and it is produced by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The Directory is a comprehensive, online, searchable database that provides full details on virtually every hormonal contraceptive drug by brand, manufacturer and country availability.

The Directory is a widely used and free resource – the only one of its kind – with 15,000 users in 75 countries including health professionals, women and educators. Consulting the database, a family planning clinic in Uganda, for example, can advise a client if her contraceptive can be substituted for an alternative, and a health programme manager can use it to avoid ordering duplicate pills under different brand names.

IPPF has completely updated the Directory. Following a full redesign, the 2012 version contains even more information on brands, manufacturers, compositions and countries. It includes new types of hormonal contraceptives that have come on the market since the last update when the database first went online in 2002, plus information about how to get a drug in different countries – whether that is prescription only, over the counter or directly through a clinic. Users can also see if a drug has been prequalified by the World Health Organization and registered with national, European (European Medicines Agency – EMA) and US (Food and Drug Administration – FDA) drug regulatory agencies.

IPPF published the first printed copy of the Directory over 20 years ago because there was no one source providing information on all hormonal contraceptives. Now it is giving health service providers access to even more information on compositions and availability of drugs. This puts them in an even better position to advise and offer a wider choice to women and couples, helping them to exercise their right to decide freely the number, spacing and timing of their children.

# 867m

## women want to avoid pregnancy

Most of these women are using a modern contraceptive method, but 222m women in the developing world have an unmet need for modern contraception.<sup>1</sup>

# 54m

## unintended pregnancies

including 21m unplanned births, 16m unsafe abortions and 7m miscarriages would be averted by serving all women in developing countries who currently have an unmet need for modern contraceptive methods.<sup>1</sup>



HIGHLY RESPECTED AND WIDELY ENDORSED ...

## THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES

The Directory is highly respected and widely endorsed. It is viewed as an essential resource, and is referenced in the World Health Organization's guide 'Family Planning: A Global Handbook for Providers'. It is recommended as the best tool for finding information about hormonal contraceptives by USAID's Knowledge4Health Project, by the National Health Service's UK Medicines Information website, and by the Office of Population Research at Princeton University.

The new database will be launched at the first ever Family Planning Summit

on 11 July, a groundbreaking event supporting the right of women and girls to use contraception. Hosted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK government, the Summit will bring together partners from around the world, including 69 of the poorest countries, to commit to ensuring that 120 million more women and girls have access to contraception by 2020.

IPPF welcomes information from users to update the database at any time. Please contact [info@ippf.org](mailto:info@ippf.org) if you have an update for the site.

There has been a general decline in unmet need for contraceptives among married women since the mid-1990s, with the exception of Africa where it has hardly changed. The most common methods of modern contraception used in Africa are injectables and oral contraceptives.<sup>1</sup>

The use of modern contraceptives varies across regions. In sub-Saharan Africa, just 17 per cent of women wanting to avoid pregnancy use modern contraceptives, which rises to 34 per cent in Western Asia and 70 per cent in South America.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 867m women in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy, 74 per cent rely on modern contraceptives to do so.<sup>1</sup>

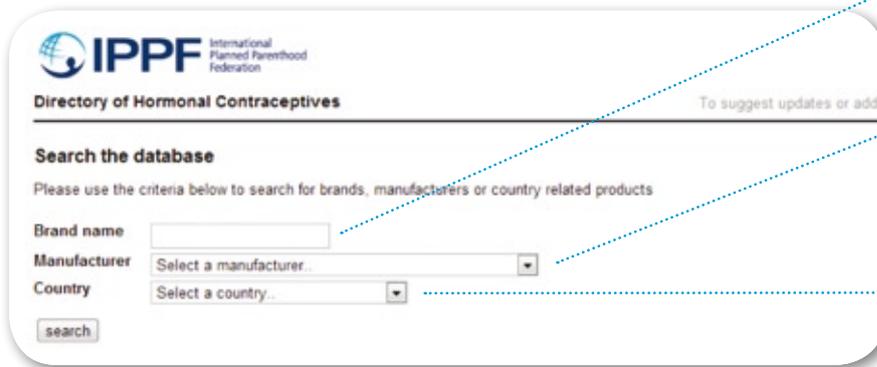
Special attention is needed to ensure that the contraceptive needs of vulnerable groups such as unmarried young women, poor women and rural women are met, and that inequities in knowledge and access are reduced.<sup>1</sup>

### SOURCE FOR ALL STATISTICS

<sup>1</sup> Singh S and Darroch JE (2012) *Adding It Up: Costs and Benefits of Contraceptive Services — Estimates for 2012*. New York: Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund.

# USING THE DIRECTORY OF HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES SEARCH TIPS

1 Arriving at the homepage you can begin searching the database using the brand name, manufacturer or country search criteria. It is possible to search using single or multiple criteria.

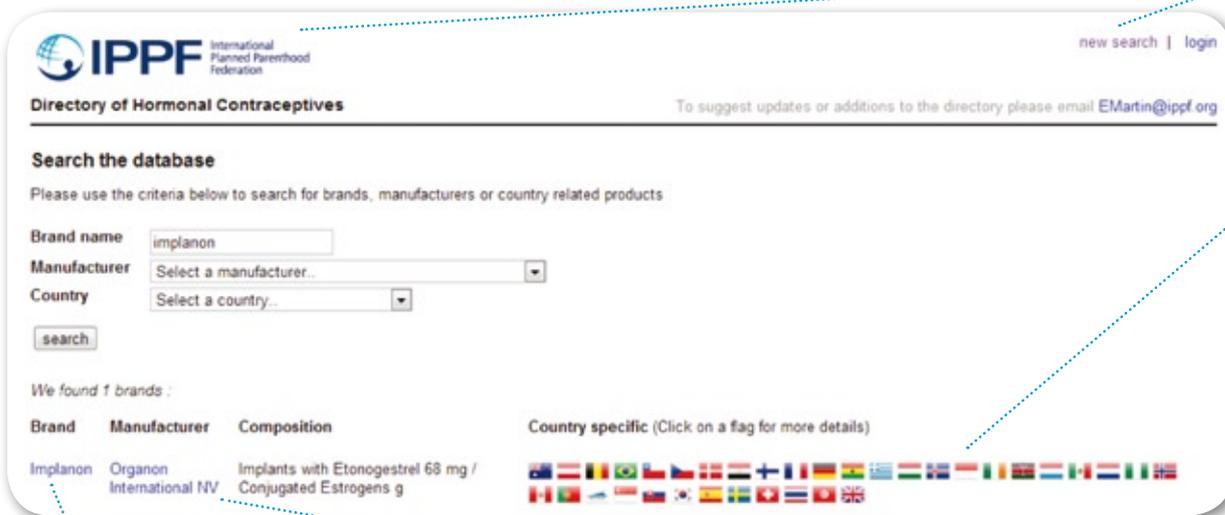


**Search by brand**  
If you know the name of the brand, you can type it into the 'Brand name' search box.

**Search by manufacturer**  
You can select a manufacturer from those listed in this drop-down 'Manufacturer' menu.

**Search by country**  
You can find out what contraceptives are available in a particular country by selecting one from this 'Country' list.

2 After searching using the criteria, you are taken to a page of results that includes details of the brand, manufacturer, composition, and information specific to different countries. Below is an example of a search result for the brand Implanon.



**Returning to the homepage**  
To return to the homepage and start a new search, either click the logo on the top left of the screen or the 'new search' link on the right.

**View country details**  
These flags indicate in which countries this drug is available. Clicking on a flag takes you to a page with information about how to get the drug – over the counter, for example – and whether it has been prequalified by WHO and is FDA or EMA registered.

**View brand details**  
To find out more about this brand of contraception, including hormone dosage, click on the name of the brand here.

**View manufacturer details**  
Further information about the manufacturer, including address and contact details, can be found by clicking on the name here.

3 After clicking on the flag you will be able to see information specific to that country, like the one for Austria on the right. Here you can see whether the drug Implanon has been prequalified by the World Health Organization and is nationally and internationally registered.



Details of WHO prequalification.

Details of FDA, EMA and country registration.

“We are a sexual health service on the east coast of northern Australia and have a lot of clients from overseas requesting information and ongoing contraception. Without this Directory we would not be able to supply such a comprehensive and evidence-based service.”

Nurse Unit Manager, Queensland, Australia

“I work in Cambridge, UK, and we frequently see students who have arrived from overseas, established on unfamiliar brands of contraceptives. It has been really useful to be able to look up exactly what they are on, so that the nearest local equivalent can be identified. An updated Directory will be very helpful, and will go straight on to my list of favourites!”

GP, Cambridge, UK

“We see patients from all over the world. It is very helpful to search for their contraceptives by name and find out what is equivalent here in the US.”

Women’s Health Clinic Program Manager, North Carolina, US

## THE DIRECTORY OF HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES

# TYPES OF HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES



### COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE (COC)

**What is it?** An oral contraceptive that combines low doses of two hormones, a progestin and an estrogen, similar to the natural hormones progesterone and estrogen in a woman’s body. Also known as ‘the pill’, low-dose combined pills, OCPs or OCs.

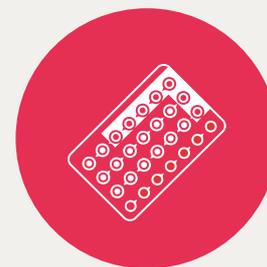
**How does it work?** It prevents ovulation – the release of eggs from the ovaries.



### COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE: PHASIC PILL

**What is it?** Phasic pills are oral contraceptives that vary the dosage of estrogen and progestin at different stages of the pill-taking cycle. For biphasic pills, there are two different stages of dosage, and for triphasic pills, there are three different stages.

**How does it work?** Pregnancy is prevented in the same way as the combined oral contraceptive – by preventing ovulation.



### PROGESTIN-ONLY PILL (POP)

**What is it?** An oral contraceptive that contains only the hormone progestin and no estrogen. This means it can be used while a woman is breastfeeding or for women who cannot take estrogen. Also known as ‘mini-pills’.

**How does it work?** It blocks the sperm from meeting an egg by thickening the cervical mucus. It also works by disrupting the menstrual cycle, including preventing ovulation.

### PROGESTIN INJECTABLE

**What is it?** An injection that contains a progestin like the natural hormone progesterone in a woman’s body, which lasts three months (depot medroxyprogesterone acetate or DMPA) or two months (norethisterone enanthate or NET-EN). Also known as ‘the shot’, ‘the jab’, the injection, Depo, Depo-Provera, Megestron or Petogen.

**How does it work?** It prevents ovulation.

### COMBINED INJECTABLE

**What is it?** A monthly injection that combines two hormones – progestin and estrogen. Common formulas are medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA)/estradiol cypionate and norethisterone enanthate (NET-EN)/estradiol valerate. Also known as monthly injectables or the injection.

**How does it work?** It prevents ovulation.

# OPTIVES LISTED



## IMPLANT

**What is it?** A long-lasting small rod or capsule placed under the skin of the upper arm that releases a progestin into a woman's body. Types include Jadelle, Implanon, Sino-Implant (Femplant, Trust Implant, Zarin) and Norplant.

**How does it work?** It blocks sperm from meeting an egg by thickening the cervical mucus. It also disrupts the menstrual cycle, preventing ovulation.

## HORMONAL IUD

**What is it?** A copper-bearing intrauterine device is a small, flexible plastic frame with copper sleeves that is inserted into the vagina. It provides long-term protection.

**How does it work?** It causes a chemical change that damages sperm and egg before they can meet.

## EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS (ECPs)

**What is it?** Can either contain a progestin alone, or a progestin together with an estrogen, and taken soon after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy. Also known as 'morning after' pills or post-coital contraceptives.

**How does it work?** It prevents or delays ovulation.

## COMBINED PATCH

**What is it?** A small, thin square of flexible plastic worn on the body that releases a progestin hormone and an estrogen hormone continuously into the bloodstream through the skin. Also known as Ortho Evra and Evra.

**How does it work?** It prevents ovulation.

## COMBINED VAGINAL RING

**What is it?** A flexible ring placed in the vagina that releases a progestin hormone and an estrogen hormone continuously into the bloodstream through the wall of the vagina. Also known as the NuvaRing.

**How does it work?** It prevents ovulation.

"I have patients from different countries who use contraception and IPPF's Directory helps me to find out what equivalent pills I can give to them in the UK. It is also interesting to see different formulations and methods available in different countries."

GP Partner, London, UK

"I think the Directory is a useful link for everyone who works with contraceptives every day. Since people are moving more and more, knowing which other product is available in other countries is vital for our job."

Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Rome, Italy

"As a manufacturer, Bayer appreciates the Directory as a good opportunity to inform health clinicians about products in a well arranged fashion."

Klaus Brill, Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals, Corporate Commercial Relations

## INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION ... SAVING LIVES EVERY DAY

Every year, millions of poor and vulnerable people around the world die wholly preventable deaths from unsafe childbirth, unsafe sex, unsafe abortion and illnesses related to sexually transmitted infections.

IPPF exists to save such lives. The Federation delivers its work through the dedication of millions of volunteers and thousands of paid staff in IPPF Central Office and six Regional Offices, and 152 Member Associations in 172 countries. Member Associations train thousands of professionals and run over 65,000 delivery points worldwide that provide people with reproductive and sexual health information, education and services. And together they fight to shape social norms and local, national and global policies that recognize a fundamental human right – the right to sexual and reproductive health.

IPPF is committed to gender equality, and to eliminating the stigma and discrimination that threatens individual well-being and leads to the widespread violation of health and human rights, particularly among women. The Federation supports a woman's right to choose to terminate her pregnancy legally and safely, and strives to eliminate sexually transmitted infections, and to reduce the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS.

Family planning as a human right has a history of challenging many social conventions. When a group of women and men started to campaign vociferously and visibly for women's rights to control their own fertility in the early 1950s, they faced great hostility trying to gain acceptance for things that we take for granted today. Some were imprisoned. But they emerged determined to work with different cultures, traditions, laws and religious attitudes to improve the lives of women around the world. And so, at the 3rd International Conference on Planned Parenthood in 1952, eight national family planning associations founded the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

As the Federation celebrates 60 years, it continues to strive for a world in which all women, men and young people have access to the sexual and reproductive health information and services they need: a world in which choices are fully respected, and in which stigma and discrimination have no place.

### LEARN MORE

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Directory, please email [info@ippf.org](mailto:info@ippf.org)

#### SEARCH THE DIRECTORY

<http://contraceptive.ippf.org>

#### SEND UPDATES

IPPF welcomes information from users to update the database at any time. Please contact [info@ippf.org](mailto:info@ippf.org) if you have an update for the site.

#### TO READ MORE

For more resources, please see our website: [www.ippf.org](http://www.ippf.org)



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