

All About the Intrauterine device (IUD)

Clinic Phone # _____ 24 Hour emergency phone # _____

What is the intrauterine device (IUD)?

- A small piece of plastic placed inside your uterus to keep you from getting pregnant.
- A clinician puts the IUD inside your uterus.
- There are two kinds of IUD's.
 - Mirena (works for up to 5 years)
 - ParaGard (works for up to 10 years)

How does an IUD work?

- The Mirena IUD releases small amounts of the hormone progestin into the uterus which keeps the sperm & egg from meeting.
- The ParaGard IUD has copper that kills the sperm when they enter the uterus.

How well does an IUD work?

- Both IUDs are very good at keeping a woman from getting pregnant.
- About 1 in 100 women (and probably none) will get pregnant when using either IUD available.

How is the IUD put in?

The IUD is put into your uterus through your vagina and cervix (the opening to your uterus). The procedure may be uncomfortable and sometimes it can be a little painful.

A clinician uses a very thin plastic tube to put the IUD in. When the IUD is in place, the plastic tube is pulled out.

There will be a short string or two small threads that you can feel by putting your finger in your vagina. Check the string or threads every month to make sure the IUD is in place.

Some women should not use the IUD.

These are some reasons why you may not be able to use an IUD:

- If you have vaginal bleeding for no known reason.
- If you have or have had breast cancer (Mirena)

Both IUD's have these possible side effects

- Cramping when the IUD is put in or taken out.
- Spotting between periods, especially right after it is put in.

Paragard may also have these side effects:

- Heavier or longer periods each month
- Painful cramps with your period

Mirena may also have these side effects:

- Very light periods or no periods
- Headaches, dizziness, nausea, sore breasts, or acne. These usually get better after the 1st few months.

What are some other things I should know about the IUD?

- The IUD is a safe method for most women.
- You can ask your clinician to remove the IUD at anytime.
- If you have your IUD removed to become pregnant, consider using another form of birth control for one cycle.
- Your ability to get pregnant will come back soon after you have the IUD removed.
- The IUD is as effective as having your tubes tied but is **reversible**.
- The IUD does not interrupt sex
- If you get a sexual disease, it could spread to your uterus and tubes. Use condoms to prevent this.
- Between 2% and 10% of users spontaneously expel their IUD within the first year. Check the string each month to make sure the IUD is in place by putting your finger into your vagina to feel the string.
- Removal of the Paragard IUD is necessary in 10 years but can be removed anytime by your clinician.
- Removal of the Mirena IUD is necessary after 5 years but can be removed anytime by your clinician.

Watch for these rare warning signs. (*PAINS*)

- *Period* late (pregnancy); abnormal spotting or bleeding
- *Abdominal* pain, pain with sex
- *Infection* exposure (STD's); abnormal vaginal discharge
- *Not feeling well*, fever or chills
- *String* missing, shorter or longer

If you have any of these call your clinic right away.

**The IUD does not protect you
from HIV (the AIDS virus) or other diseases
you could get from having sex.**

Use condoms to protect yourself from these diseases.