

About the IUD

The IUD is a small flexible piece of plastic placed in your uterus to keep you from getting pregnant.

The IUD (intrauterine device) keeps the man's sperm from meeting the woman's egg. IUDs have either copper or a hormone to help them work.



My provider answered all my questions about the IUD.

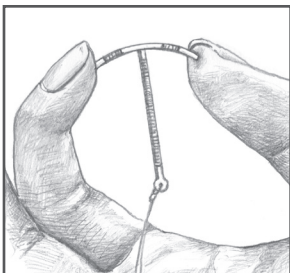
There are two kinds of IUDs.

Talk to your health care provider about which IUD would be best for you.

Mirena® is one kind of IUD.

- It works for up to 5 years.
- It has a hormone in it to help it work.
- After the first 3 to 6 months, most women bleed and cramp less than they did before using the Mirena IUD. Some women stop having periods.

ParaGard® is the other kind of IUD.



- It works for up to 10 years.
- It uses copper to help it work.
- Many women have heavier bleeding and cramping during

their periods, especially for the first 3 to 6 months.

How well does the IUD work?

If 1,000 women used Mirena for a year, only 2 would get pregnant; and if they used ParaGard, only 8 would get pregnant. That's less than 1% for either IUD.

How do I get it?

A health care provider puts the IUD in your uterus.

What women like:

- The IUD works very well to prevent pregnancy.
- It can work for 5 or 10 years, or more.
- The IUD does not interrupt having sex.
- You don't have to think about it.

What some women don't like:

- Some women have cramping, bleeding, and a backache for a few minutes or hours after the IUD is put in.
- Some women don't like the changes in periods they may have.

How is the IUD put in?

A health care provider uses a very thin plastic tube to put the IUD in. It takes only a few minutes.

- The IUD is put into your uterus through your vagina and cervix. (The cervix is the opening to the uterus.)
- Some women may have cramping when it is put in. Your health care provider may tell you to take Motrin® or another pain-killer ahead of time.

There will be two small threads coming through the cervix.

- You can feel them by putting your finger high into your vagina.
- Your health care provider can show you how to check for the threads.

The IUD may not be safe for some women.

Your provider will ask about any health concerns or problems you may have, such as:

- Vaginal bleeding for no known reason.
- An untreated infection of the uterus and tubes.
- Cancer of the cervix or ovaries or problems with your uterus.

Your provider will help you decide whether the IUD is safe for you to use.

Are there problems with using the IUD?

The most common problems are changes in your period and spotting (light bleeding between periods). These problems may last for the first 3 to 6 months or longer.

There are rare and sometimes serious problems:

- The IUD may come out by itself. If it does, use another birth control method and call your health care provider.
- Sometimes the IUD can poke through the uterus or cervix when it is being put in.
- If a pregnancy were to happen, it could be outside of the uterus.

Watch for these warning signs.

Call your health care provider right away:

- If the threads feel longer or shorter.
- If you can feel part of the IUD slipping out through your cervix.
- If you think you might be pregnant.
- If you have severe cramping or heavy bleeding.
- If you have chills or fever.
- If you or your partner have pain with sex.
- If you have a discharge from your vagina that is not normal.

The IUD does not protect you from diseases people could get from having sex (STDs).

Using a condom along with your method is the best way to protect yourself from STDs.