

Q When can the IUD be removed?

A A trained doctor or nurse can take the IUD out at any time, by pulling gently on the threads. Your fertility returns to normal as soon as the IUD is taken out.

Q Will an IUD affect my periods?

A You may have some light bleeding between your periods in the first six months after you have had the IUD fitted.

Many women have heavier, longer and more painful periods. This may improve over time.

Q What if I become pregnant while I am using an IUD?

A Very few women become pregnant while using an IUD. I



Q I've just had a baby. Can I use an IUD?

A Yes, an IUD is usually put in from four weeks after a vaginal or caesarean birth. You will need to use another method of contraception from three weeks (day 21) after the birth until the IUD is put in. An IUD can be used safely while you are breastfeeding and will not affect your milk supply.

An IUD can be put in immediately after a miscarriage or abortion if you were pregnant for less than 24 weeks.

All
family planning services
at health centres ,
including condoms,
are
FREE!

For more information
contact your doctor,
or the nearest health centre

Produced by

THE MATERNAL & CHILD
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Ministry
of
Health



INFORMATION FOR MEN & WOMEN

The IUD INTRAUTERINE DEVICE

...Your
Questions
Answered



Q What is an IUD?

A An IUD is a small plastic and copper device that is put into your uterus (womb). It has one or two soft threads on the end. These thin threads hang through the opening at the entrance of your uterus (cervix) into the top of your vagina.

An IUD can stay in for 5–10 years, depending on type. If you are aged 40 or older when the IUD is fitted, it can be left in until the menopause. It should only be fitted by a trained doctor or nurse. An IUD is sometimes called a 'coil'.

Q How effective is an IUD?

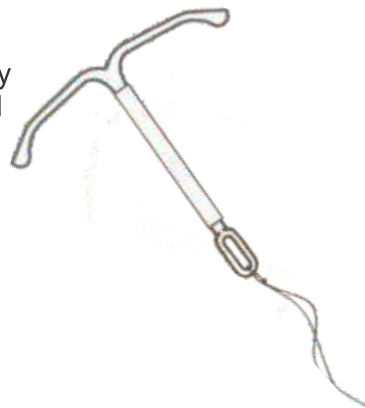
A IUDs are over 99 per cent effective. This means less than two women in 100 will get pregnant over five years.

The IUD is a long-acting reversible method of contraception. All long-acting methods are very effective because while they are being used you do not have to remember to take or use contraception.

Q When will the IUD start to work?

A An IUD can be put in at any time in your menstrual cycle if it is certain that you are not pregnant.

**It will
be effective
immediately.**



Q How does an IUD work?

A The main way an IUD works is to stop sperm reaching an egg. It does this by preventing sperm from surviving in the cervix, uterus or fallopian tube.

It may also work by stopping a fertilised egg from implanting in the uterus.

An IUD does not cause an abortion.

Q What are the advantages and disadvantages of an IUD?

A Advantages:

- It works as soon as it is put in.
- It works for 5–10 years depending on type (but can be taken out sooner).
- It doesn't interrupt sex.
- It can be used if you are breastfeeding.
- Your fertility returns to normal as soon as the IUD is taken out.
- It is not affected by other medicines.

Disadvantages:

- Your periods may be heavier, longer or more painful. This may improve after a few months.
- You will first need an internal examination to check the IUD is suitable, and another when it is fitted.
- The IUD does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections, so you may have to use condoms as well. If you get an infection when an IUD is in place this could lead to a pelvic infection if it is not treated.

Q Can anyone use an IUD?

A Most women can use an IUD, including women who have never been pregnant and women who are HIV positive. Some of the conditions which may mean you should not use an IUD are:

- you think you might already be pregnant
- you and your partner are at risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection.

Or you have:

- an untreated sexually transmitted infection or pelvic infection
- problems with your uterus or cervix
- unexplained bleeding from your vagina (for example, between periods or after sex).

Q How is an IUD put in?

A The IUD is fitted inside the uterus. Fitting an IUD takes about 15–20 minutes. It can be uncomfortable, or painful for some women. You may get a period type pain and some light bleeding for a few days after the IUD is fitted. Pain relieving drugs can help with this.

If you feel unwell and have any pain in your lower abdomen, with a high temperature or a smelly discharge from your vagina in the first three weeks after the IUD is fitted, see a doctor or go back to the clinic where it was fitted as soon as possible.