

# INTRAUTERINE DEVICE (“IUD”)



## What is an IUD?

An IUD is a tiny plastic device placed in the uterus by a trained provider. There are two types: one made with copper (it contains no hormones) and the other is made with hormones similar to the birth control pill. The copper IUD called Paragard works by causing the uterine lining to change and makes the sperm move slowly preventing fertilization of the egg. The hormonal IUD (Mirena) works by:

- Keeping the body from releasing an egg that could be fertilized by a man’s sperm

- Causing changes to the cervical mucus making it more difficult for sperm to enter the uterus.
- Keeping a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus.

## How well does it work?

An IUD works very well. Tests show that it prevents pregnancy about 96 to 98 percent of the time.

## How do you use an IUD?

An IUD is put in your uterus by a doctor or a nurse. After it is put in, you do not need to do anything when you have sex. The only thing you need to do is check once a month after your period to make sure the IUD’s string is in place.

## To check your string:

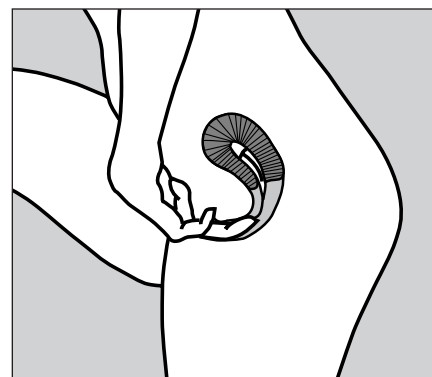
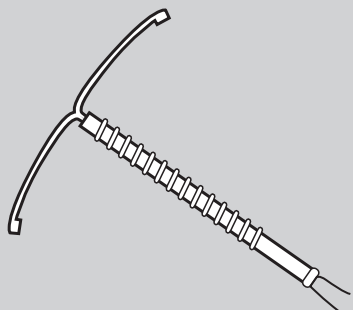
1. Wash your hands.
2. Squat down or stand with one foot on the toilet.
3. Put your index or middle finger high into your vagina and find your cervix. The cervix is the opening to your uterus

(womb). It will feel firm, like the end of your nose.

4. Feel for the string. It will feel small and you may need to ask the nurse or doctor to help you practice before you leave.
5. If you can feel the string, don’t do anything.
6. If you cannot feel the string or you are not sure the IUD is in the right place, call your doctor or clinic and use another kind of birth control until your doctor or nurse can examine you.

CONTINUED ON BACK

**THE IUD**  
(intrauterine device)



## Facts About Intrauterine Device (“IUD”)

### Why is an IUD a good choice for me?

The IUD can be left in place for a long time. The copper IUD, Paragard, lasts up to 10 years. The hormonal IUD, Mirena, lasts for 5 years. They are both very reliable methods that require very little effort by the user and the ability to get pregnant returns immediately after the IUD is removed.

### Is there anyone who should not use an IUD?

The IUD is not for everyone. You should not use an IUD if:

- 1. YOU CURRENTLY HAVE TWO OR MORE SEXUAL PARTNERS.**
- 2. YOU HAVE HAD INFECTIONS OF YOUR FEMALE ORGANS CALLED PELVIC INFLAMMATORY DISEASE.**
- 3. YOU ARE PREGNANT OR THINK YOU MIGHT BE.**
- 4. YOU HAVE HAD AN ABNORMAL PAP SMEAR AND HAVE NOT BEEN TREATED FOR IT.**
- 5. YOU HAVE HAD AN ECTOPIC (TUBAL) PREGNANCY OR HAVE A PROBLEM WITH YOUR UTERUS (ABNORMAL OR UNUSUAL UTERUS).**
- 6. YOU ARE ALLERGIC TO COPPER (SOME IUDS ARE MADE OF COPPER).**

### Will I have problems if I use an IUD?

After you have an IUD put in, you may feel some changes in your body. The IUD may cause you to bleed more when you have your period or cause cramps sometimes. However, women who use the Mirena IUD often report a decrease in blood flow and cramping, and some have no periods at all.

### Are there any warning signs I need to watch for?

Call your doctor or clinic if:

- YOU HAVE PAIN WHEN YOU HAVE SEX.**
- YOU HAVE PAIN IN YOUR STOMACH OR BELLY.**
- YOU HAVE A DISCHARGE FROM YOUR VAGINA.**
- YOU CAN'T FIND THE IUD STRING OR IF THE STRING SEEMS SHORTER OR LONGER THAN BEFORE.**



### Where can I get an IUD?

Some health departments, family planning clinics and private doctor offices.

### Can I breastfeed if I have an IUD?

Yes!

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## REMEMBER:

Using an IUD will not protect you from AIDS and other diseases you can get when you have sex. Use a latex condom to protect yourself.

DOCTOR/CLINIC PHONE NUMBER: