

Intrauterine Device (IUD) – Patient Information

What is an IUD?

An intrauterine device (IUD) is a small T-shaped device placed in the uterus to prevent pregnancy. It is a long-acting, reversible, and highly effective form of contraception.

Types of IUDs:

Hormonal IUD (Levonorgestrel)

- Releases progesterone hormone
- Lasts **5-8 years** (type dependent)
- Often makes periods lighter or stop

Copper IUD

- Hormone-free, wrapped with copper
- Lasts **5-10 years**
- Periods may be slightly heavier or more painful

Effectiveness:

>99% effective

Works continuously without daily effort to remember taking medications

Fertility returns quickly after removal

How IUDs Work:

- Prevent sperm from fertilizing an egg
- Hormonal IUDs also thin the uterine lining to help prevent implantation and thicken cervical mucous to create a barrier to sperm
- Copper IUD creates an environment toxic to sperm

Benefits:

- Very effective and long-lasting
- Low maintenance
- Safe for most people (including those who cannot use estrogen)
- Hormonal IUDs may reduce heavy or painful periods

Possible Side Effects & Risks

Hormonal IUD:

- Irregular spotting in first 3–6 months
- Lighter or no periods over time
- Mild headaches, nausea, acne, or breast tenderness, bloating
- Cramping after insertion, will settle

Copper IUD:

- Heavier or longer periods, more cramping (often improves with time)
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Risks:

- Cramping or pain during/after insertion
- IUD expulsion (partial or complete)
- Slightly increased infection risk in first 20 days
- Fainting during insertion (rare)
- Unable to insert on the day (very rare)
- Uterine perforation during insertion (very rare)
- Cervical shock (very rare)
- Infection

NOTE - IUDs **do not** protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Who Can Use an IUD?

Most people can safely use an IUD, including adolescents and those who have never been pregnant. Your clinician will review your medical history to determine if an IUD is a safe and suitable option for you.

What to Expect with Insertion:

Procedure takes about **5–10 minutes**

Cramping or pressure is common

Light bleeding or cramping may last a few days

Pain relief (e.g., ibuprofen) may help

When to Seek Medical Care (PAINS)

Contact your clinician if you have:

Period late or pregnancy symptoms

Abdominal pain or severe cramps

Infection signs (fever, chills, foul discharge)

Not feeling well or pain during sex

Strings missing, shorter, or longer than usual

Follow-Up

Check strings 6 weeks post procedure/ insertion

Routine follow-up as recommended

IUD can be removed at any time if you wish to conceive or change methods

Questions?

Discuss which IUD option best fits your health needs and reproductive goals with your GP.

***** TBC*** Fees:**

IUD Insertion Cost (up to 60-minute appointment):

Total Fee = \$594.90 (max)

Total Gap= \$200 (max)

IUD Removal Cost (30-minute appointment):

Total Fee= \$243.55 (max)

Total Gap= \$150 (max)

IUD Consent Changeover, Insertion and Removal Cost:

Total Fee= \$644.90 (max)

Total Gap= \$250 (max)

<https://www1.racgp.org.au/getmedia/b48531ad-4874-40d6-8e53-14969c163162/AJGP-04-2022-Clinical-Pearson-LARC-New-Evidence-Fig-1.pdf.aspx>