

# IUD Information

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| <b>What is the IUD?</b>  | The IUD (IntraUterine Device) is a plastic rod with 2 arms and a string. It is inserted into the uterus to prevent pregnancy. It is about the size of a quarter. There are 2 types of IUD in the US: the copper IUD and the progestin (hormone) IUD. (To choose the right one for you, see the chart on the other side.) |
| <b>How well does the IUD work?</b>   | The IUD works better than the pill, the patch, the ring, and the shot. The IUD prevents pregnancy in 99% of women who use it.  |
| <b>Is the IUD safe?</b>  | Yes. Serious problems with the IUD are rare, and most happen the first few days.   |
| <b>Can I get an IUD if I've never had a baby?</b>                                  | Yes.   |
| <b>How is the IUD inserted?</b>  | After putting a speculum in the vagina, a medical provider inserts the IUD into the uterus. Many providers give pain medicine first. Some women have cramps and spotting for a few hours.  |
| <b>Does the IUD have side effects?</b>   | Yes. Most side effects improve after a few months. See other side for details.   |
| <b>Does the IUD cause infections?</b>  | No.  |
| <b>Does the IUD protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections?</b> | No, the IUD does NOT protect you from sexually transmitted infections. Unless you and your partner have sex only with each other, you should use a latex condom every time you have sex (even with the IUD in place).  |
| <b>Do I need to check the IUD?</b>   | You should be able to feel the IUD's string in your vagina. Check the string once a month. If you don't feel the string, call your medical provider.   |
| <b>Does the IUD cause an abortion?</b>   | No. The IUD works by preventing sperm from fertilizing eggs.   |
| <b>What happens when I want to get pregnant?</b>                                   | Most women get pregnant quickly after a medical provider removes the IUD.  |

# Which IUD is right for me?

|                                  | <b>Copper IUD</b>    | <b>Progestin IUD</b>    |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Brand name</b>                | Paragard™   | Mirena™  |
| <b>How long can you use it?</b>  | 10-12 years   | 5-7 years  |
| <b>Does it contain hormones?</b> | No  | Yes: low dose of progestin (no estrogen)   |
| <b>Side effects</b>              | Heavy periods<br>Cramps with your period  | Spotting<br>Less common: bloating, nausea, headaches, breast pain<br>No period after a few months – this is not risky, and many women like it  |
| <b>Benefits</b>                  | No need to think about birth control before or during sex<br>Private<br>No need to buy refills every month<br>Works better than the pill, the patch, the ring, or the shot<br>Can be used while breastfeeding | No need to think about birth control before or during sex<br>Private<br>No need to buy refills every month<br>Works better than the pill, the patch, the ring, or the shot<br>Can be used while breastfeeding<br>Can decrease heavy periods, cramps, PMS |
| <b>Cost</b>                      | Covered by most insurance plans<br>If not covered, may cost a few hundred dollars   | Covered by most insurance plans<br>If not covered, may cost a few hundred dollars  |