



IUD Information

What is the IUD?	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.)
How well does the IUD work?	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.
Is the IUD safe?	Yes. Serious problems with the IUD are rare, and most happen the first few days.
Can I get an IUD if I've never had a baby?	Yes.
How is the IUD inserted?	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.
Does the IUD have side effects?	Yes. Most side effects improve after a few months. See other side for details.
Does the IUD cause infections?	No.
Does the IUD protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections?	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).
Do I need to check the IUD?	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.
Does the IUD cause an abortion?	No. The IUD works by preventing sperm from fertilizing eggs.
What happens when I want to get pregnant?	Most women get pregnant quickly after a medical provider removes the IUD.

Which IUD is right for me?

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