

IUD/IUS

How:

The IUD (Paragard[®] copper intrauterine device) or IUSs (Mirena[®], Skyla[®] and Liletta[™] intrauterine systems) are small pieces of plastic or metal. They are put inside your uterus to prevent pregnancy. The Paragard[®] has copper that kills sperm and has no chemicals or hormones. The Mirena[®], Skyla[®] and Liletta[™] use the same hormone used in birth control pills. They thicken the cervical mucus (liquid at the uterine opening) to stop sperm from reaching the egg and stop the egg from moving through the tubes so it can't get fertilized.

When:

An IUD or IUS can be put in the uterus at any time as long as you are not pregnant. They work very well for women of any weight. You can get one even if you have never had a baby or if you are a teen.

Advantages:

- You do not have to think about birth control every time you have sex.
- Provides protection from some cancers.
- IUSs make periods lighter and less painful.
- You could get pregnant soon after it is removed.
- Effective long term birth control: the Paragard[®] IUD can work for up to 12 years, Mirena[®] works up to 5 years,



and Skyla[®] and Liletta[™] work up to 3 years.

- Can be used while breastfeeding.

Disadvantages:

- Requires an appointment with a trained healthcare provider for insertion and removal of IUD/IUS.
- Insertion and removal may be uncomfortable and sometimes difficult.
- You will need to return to the clinic to have the IUD/IUS removed.
- With the copper IUD, some women have longer or heavier periods.
- May increase cramps.
- May be expelled without knowing.
- With the IUS, at first some women have spotting between periods. Later, some women may stop having periods.
- Must be able to feel for the strings.
- Does not protect against HIV/STDs.

Side effects:

Some women have irregular bleeding during the first months, headaches, acne, sore breasts or moodiness, depression and anxiety. It may cause ovarian cysts.

Risks:

You should not have an IUS/IUD placed if you have:

- Breast, cervical or uterine cancer now.
- Problems with the shape of your uterus.
- An infection in your uterus or pelvis.
- Unusual bleeding from your vagina.
- An allergy to Paragard® IUD copper.

Warning Signs:

If you develop any of the signs below, contact your provider right away:

- Period late (possible pregnancy), abnormal spotting or bleeding.
- Abdominal pain, pain with intercourse.
- Exposure to STDs; abnormal vaginal discharge.
- Not feeling well, fever, chills.
- String missing, shorter or longer.

Other information:

- The IUD/IUS may be removed at any time.
- The IUD must be removed by the end of the 12th year.
- The Mirena® must be removed by the end of the 5th year.

- The Skyla® and Liletta™ must be removed by the end of the 3rd year. If you do not have another IUD/IUS reinserted or start another birth control method right away, you could get pregnant in as little as 2-3 weeks after it is removed.
- If you do not want another IUD/IUS reinserted, you will need to change to another birth control method before or at the time the IUD/IUS is removed.
- Check for the IUD/IUS strings monthly.
- Use condoms with each sexual encounter to prevent STDs.

Effectiveness:

With the IUD or IUS, less than 1 out of 100 women will get pregnant in a year.