

Your Intra Uterine Contraception (IUC) Fitting – Before the Appointment and After

This is a general leaflet for all those booking for an IUC (sometimes called a coil) so some parts may not apply to you. Please do read it all in case as there are instructions which help you prepare for your coil fitting and with any questions afterwards. If you still have questions after reading this, please book an appointment with your doctor before attending for your IUC fitting.

There are 2 types of IUC (“the coil”):

1. The copper **IUD** (Intrauterine Device) contains a small amount of copper and does not contain hormones but can sometimes make periods heavier. They prevent the sperm from meeting an egg and from implanting in the womb
2. The hormone containing **IUS** (Intrauterine System) eg Mirena / Jaydess / Kyleena , which contains a small amount of progestogen and can help reduce or stop periods.

BENEFITS:

- Copper IUD can work for up to 10 years depending on the brand and has no hormones
- Mirena and Kyleena work for 5 years, Jaydess for 3 years
- With a Mirena (IUS) your periods normally become lighter and shorter and they can stop after the first year (this is safe).
- Your fertility returns to normal immediately when it is removed.
- It is safe in breastfeeding, with other medicines and if you can't use the pill – there are very few reasons you can't use it and your doctor will ask some questions to check this.
- More than 99% effective. Fewer than 1 woman will get pregnant if 100 women use the IUC for contraception for 1 year.

RISKS:

- Infection:** slight increased risk during the first 20 days after the coil is put in. A vaginal screening swab is taken to exclude Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea infection. You are at higher risk if you have had sex with a new partner in the last 3 months, are less than 25 years old, have previously had an STI, or have concerns that you may be at risk of an STI.
- Expulsion:** The IUC can be pushed out by your uterus or it can move. This happens in 1 in 20 IUC fits – normally in the first 3 months. This is why we teach you to check for the threads and/or check the threads at 6 weeks after insertion
- Perforation:** There is a 2 in 2000 risk that the IUC might go through the uterus when it is put in. If this does happen it may need to be removed by surgery. If this occurs there is a risk of damage to bowel or bladder as these organs are near the uterus. The risk of perforation is more likely within 6 months of delivery (particularly c-section) and is 6 times greater if you are breastfeeding. This is not a reason to

prevent IUC insertion but we like to ensure that you are fully consented of the risks in your particular circumstances.

-If you do become pregnant on the IUC there is a small risk of ectopic **pregnancy** (pregnancy outside the womb). It is less common in women using IUC than in women not using contraception but if you develop symptoms of pregnancy/abdominal pain you should always have a pregnancy test and see a doctor.

BOOKING YOUR IUC FITTING:

If you would like to have an IUD/IUS, call the surgery or speak to reception to book the appointment. Then ensure you take and hand in the STI screening vaginal swab at least 1 week prior to your appointment

Appointments are generally on a Thursday but it may be possible to accommodate another day in exceptional circumstances.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT

- Take an Ibuprofen 400mg (with food) &/or **Paracetamol (1g) 1 hour** before
- Bring a **sanitary towel** with you as you may experience some spotting after the procedure.
- **Do not have unprotected sex in the 7 days before the IUC fitting if you are coming for a coil change / removal.**
- **We must be sure that you are not pregnant** when we fit your coil but we do not have to fit it during your period.
- If fitted in the first 7 days of your cycle you get immediate protection from pregnancy. This only applies if you have a 28 day cycle – if it is shorter please inform your doctor at time of fitting as you may not be covered immediately.
- If the IUS is fitted at any other time of your cycle it takes 7 days to be effective as contraception so you must also use another method (i.e. condoms/pill) during this time. The IUD works immediately.
- When we fit your IUC there will be a nurse and doctor present, you will be examined by the doctor as you would be for a smear then a local anaesthetic gel will be applied to your cervix (opening to your womb). The IUC will then be placed into your womb. You may feel some period pain like cramps when this is done. We can then show you how to feel for the threads of the IUC if you would like to be able to check them– they lie just at your cervix (they do not hang outside like tampon strings and your partner should not feel them).
- **Please allow 30 minutes in total for the appointment.** You may experience period pains afterwards so may wish to avoid making plans, especially exercise, in case you don't feel up to it. If these pains do not improve or are severe please seek medical attention.

- Please try to avoid bring children with you to the appointment

AFTER YOUR IUC FITTING

- No Tampons or Sex for 3 days
- Cramping discomfort is very common following insertion and can last for a few days. It is wise to take a regular painkiller such as paracetamol or ibuprofen for the first 24 hours. You may need to take them for 2 to 3 days. If the pain persists for longer than 5 days or worsens, you should seek medical advice.
- You may experience some irregular bleeding for up to 3 months-this can be bothersome but many women with an IUS find that their periods stop all together after this or at least get much lighter so they feel it is worth the initial stage of bleeding. See your doctor if you are not coping with the bleeding as you could take the progesterone or combined pill at the same time whilst the bleeding settles down.
- With the Copper IUD you will continue to get your periods at the normal time. They may be heavier (normally an extra day of bleeding).
- If you have a fever, severe abdominal cramps or smelly discharge you need to see a doctor as there is a small risk of infection in the first 20 days following the procedure
- Keep a record of the date your IUC was fitted and when it is due to be replaced.
- **If you do not wish to become pregnant please refrain from sex (or use condoms) for 7 days prior to coil removal.** If you wish to become pregnant, start folic acid (recommended 3 months prior to and for first 3 months of pregnancy) as it may be possible to become pregnant immediately after the IUC is removed. If you are changing to a new form of contraception, please start this 7 days prior to IUC removal.
- The IUC does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections and using condoms is advised to reduce your risk of infection.
- Speak to your doctor if you would like more information about sexual health screening / contraception / pre-pregnancy planning.
- If you wish you can check your coil threads on a regular basis, this is not necessary but discuss with your doctor if you wish to do this.
- If at any point you cannot feel your coil threads when you have been able to feel them at other times, or if you think your coil has fallen out, then do not rely on it for contraception. Use an alternative such as condoms. Seek medical advice straight away, as emergency contraception may be required.

- **Book a 6 week appointment with our practice nurse to check the IUC threads**

The IUC clinic is a special 30 minute appointment with a doctor and an assistant. Please ensure you attend the appointment and avoid last minute cancellations.

You can also arrange to have your IUC fitted / sexual health screening at the local family planning clinic. Details from Reception.