



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 3 types of IUD in the US: the copper IUD and 2 progestin (hormone) IUDs. (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
	 <p>ParaGard™</p>	 <p>Mirena™ Skyla™</p>
Brand name	ParaGard™	Mirena™, Skyla™
When does the IUD start working?	The copper IUD starts working right away.	The progestin IUD starts working 7 days after it is inserted. Use condoms or another back-up method of birth control for the first 7 days after the IUD is inserted to prevent pregnancy.
How long can you use it?	10-12 years	Mirena™: 5-7 years Skyla™: 3 years
Does it contain hormones?	No	Yes: low dose of progestin (no estrogen)
Side effects	Heavier periods Cramping for the first 1-2 months after it is inserted Cramps with your period	Spotting Cramping for the first 1-2 months after it is inserted Less common: bloating, nausea, headaches, breast pain After a few months, periods may get lighter or stop – 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 The copper IUD can be used as emergency contraception. It can be inserted up to 5 days after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy.	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 May decrease heavy periods, cramps, PMS
Cost	Covered by most insurance plans If not covered, may cost several hundred dollars	Covered by most insurance plans If not covered, may cost several hundred dollars