



Intrauterine Contraception - IUC

- IUCs are methods of birth control inserted inside the uterus (intra-uterine).
- The non- hormonal IUC is a small T-shaped plastic device with copper wire around it.
- The hormonal IUC contains one hormone called progestin.
- IUCs must be inserted by a health care professional (HCP), and are at least 99% effective in preventing pregnancy for five years.
- The copper IUC can also be used for emergency contraception if inserted within 7 days of unprotected sex.

How do IUC's work?

- The hormonal IUC thickens the mucus in the cervix making it harder for sperm to enter the uterus, thins the lining of the uterus and impairs implantation in the uterus.
- The copper IUC primarily inhibits sperm from reaching an egg and impairs implantation in the uterus.

How do I use IUC (hormonal or non-hormonal)?

- IUCs are inserted by a health care practitioner at our clinic. You will have a phone assessment to make sure you are a good candidate for the device.
- If you choose a hormonal IUC, a prescription will be faxed to your pharmacy. You will bring the device to be inserted to your insertion appointment
- If you choose a copper IUC you may purchase it at our clinic.
- IUCs can be inserted any time during your cycle provided pregnancy is ruled out.
- The copper IUC is effective immediately. The hormonal IUC (Kyleena or Mirena) is effective 7 days after insertion.
- Check your IUC strings. If you feel the plastic part of your IUC or if the strings are absent or longer than usual, use another method of birth control such as condoms and seek medical attention.
- Panty liners and pads are encouraged over tampon use for the first 72 hours after insertion.
- The use of Diva cups® may increase the risk of IUC expulsion (falling out). If you use a diva cup remember to break the suction before removing the cup.
- If you feel comfortable, you can have sexual intercourse 48 hours after insertion.
- Never attempt to remove an IUC yourself.



Preparing for the insertion day

- Bring your hormonal IUD to the clinic, it may take your pharmacy a few days to get this for you.
- Use OTC pain medication such as Ibuprofen or Naproxen before your appointment.
- Make sure you eat a meal before your appointment
- Bring a pad with you to your appointment.
- When you arrive at 179 Clarence St. please ensure you are wearing a mask. We ask that you come alone so we have room for proper distancing. The doors to the clinic are locked, but ring the bell and we will let you in.
- Please bring your Ontario Health Card (OHIP card)

Common Side Effects

- Most people feel discomfort during and after the procedure as your uterus adjusts to the IUC. The cramps will lessen with time. Rest. Mild heat to your abdomen and/or pain medication may help.
- It is **normal** to have some mild bleeding and spotting during the first few days after the insertion.
- For hormonal IUC, expect spotting and/or irregular bleeding for 3-6 months, then your period will usually decrease over time. If there is an **abrupt** change in your bleeding pattern such as very heavy bleeding or no bleeding, contact the health care provider who inserted your IUC.
- For the copper IUC, you may have longer or heavier periods with cramping following insertion. This may improve over time.
- **Note:** Heavy bleeding and clots (causing you to change pads every hour) could be a sign of a perforation and requires urgent follow-up at the emergency room.

Remember

IUCs do not protect against STIs or HIV. Use condoms to lower your risk.

Call the Sexual Health Clinic at 613-234-4641 or go to the emergency department if you have any of these symptoms:

- Abdominal pain
- Fever and chills
- Increased or foul smelling discharge
- Heavy bleeding or clots with your period
- No period with copper IUC

JAN 2021