

# Intrauterine device (IUD) insertion

## Gynaecology

**An IUD is a reliable form of contraception. It is also called an IUD, which stands for intrauterine device. There are two types of IUDs: hormonal IUDs and copper IUDs. In this folder you can read more about both types and how they work.**

### When is an IUD prescribed?

An IUD may be prescribed:

- To prevent pregnancy
- If you have heavy bleeding or pain during your periods
- If you already use oestrogen for menopause symptoms, to prevent the lining of the womb from becoming too thick

### How does an IUD work and what changes in your period?

#### Hormonal IUD (Mirena® and Kyleena®)

A hormonal IUD releases a small amount of hormone inside the uterus. This makes the lining of the uterus thinner. Your body needs time to adjust to this. During the first months you may have irregular bleeding. This is often a small amount of blood, also called spotting.

In the first month after placement, you may lose some blood almost every day. Because of this, it may feel like your period lasts a long time. After a few months, the bleeding usually becomes less. Many women have only a few days of bleeding per month after three to six months. For some women, the period stops completely. A small number of women have little or no bleeding from the start.

#### Copper IUD

A copper IUD does not contain hormones. The copper makes it harder for sperm cells to move and prevents a fertilised egg from attaching. Your natural menstrual cycle usually stays the same.

During the first months, your periods may be heavier or more painful. You may lose more blood than you are used to. This is normal and happens because your body needs time to adjust to the IUD. For most women, this becomes less after a few months.

### When can an IUD be placed?

The IUD is placed by the doctor into your uterus. We advise placing a hormonal IUD within seven days after the start of your period. This way we know for sure that you are not pregnant. Use contraception, such as condoms, in the month before the placement. If there is any chance you may be pregnant, we cannot place the IUD.

A copper IUD can be used as emergency contraception. It can be placed up to five days after unprotected sex. If the IUD is placed at another time in your cycle, this is only possible if you had protected sex during the previous month.

## Placing an IUD immediately

In some cases, an IUD can be placed immediately:

- When an old IUD needs to be replaced
- After an abortion curettage in the first trimester
- If you do not have periods anymore and use an IUD for menopause symptoms together with oestrogen, it can be placed at any time
- After giving birth, the advice is to place the IUD only after six to eight weeks

## The procedure: Placing an IUD

Placing an IUD usually takes only a few minutes. You may take painkillers one hour beforehand, such as one tablet of Naproxen (500 mg) or two tablets of Paracetamol (500 mg).

First, the doctor inserts a speculum to gently open the vagina. An instrument is then used to keep the uterus in the right position. Next, the doctor measures the length of the uterus with a thin rod. After this, the IUD is placed. After the placement, the doctor performs an ultrasound to check that the IUD is in the correct position. If everything looks good, no further check-up is needed.

## Possible side effects and complications

As with all medicines, an IUD can cause side effects.

### Hormonal IUD

In the first months after placing a hormonal IUD, you may have irregular bleeding, headaches, abdominal pain or mood changes. Your breasts may also feel tense or sensitive. These complaints are usually mild and go away on their own.

### Copper IUD

In the first months after placing a copper IUD, you may lose more blood during your period. Your period may last one to two days longer, and you may have stronger menstrual cramps. This can be permanent, but it can also improve again. It differs from person to person.

## When should you contact the clinic?

We advise you to contact us if you:

- Have a fever higher than 38 degrees and increasing abdominal pain
- Have abnormal vaginal discharge
- Have more bleeding than during a normal period
- Think you may be pregnant
- Have ongoing pain in the lower abdomen
- You or your partner has pain during sex
- Can feel the IUD string in an unusual way

## Reliability of the hormonal IUD

If a hormonal IUD is placed during your period, or within seven days after your period starts, you are protected against pregnancy right away. If the IUD is placed at another time in your cycle, you need to use extra contraception, such as condoms, for the first seven days after placement.

- The Mirena® IUD protects against pregnancy for eight years.
  - If you use oestrogen for menopause symptoms, the Mirena must be replaced after three years.
  - If you use the Mirena for heavy menstrual bleeding, it must be replaced every five years.
- The Kyleena® IUD protects against pregnancy for five years.

## Reliability of the copper IUD

A copper IUD protects against pregnancy immediately after it is placed. You do not need to use extra contraception.

There are different types of copper IUDs. Some work longer than others. Depending on the type, a copper IUD provides reliable, hormone-free contraception for five to ten years.

## Emergency after visiting DC Klinieken

In case of an emergency, call: 088 0100 998.

## Insurance

DC Klinieken has contracts with all health insurers. This means that almost all care is reimbursed, just like in the hospital. You do need a referral from your (general) doctor. Please be aware of your own deductible. More information about reimbursements and possible exceptions can be found at: [www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen](http://www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen).

## Questions

For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, go to: [www.dcklinieken.nl/contact](http://www.dcklinieken.nl/contact) or contact our Service and Information Centre at 088 0100 900.