




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 5 types of IUD in the US: the copper IUD and 4 hormonal (levonorgestrel) IUDs. To choose the right one for you, see the “Which IUD Is Right for Me?” 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. IUD users don’t need to think about birth control before or during sex, and they don’t need refills each month. The IUD prevents pregnancy more than 99% of the time.
Is the IUD safe?	Yes. Serious problems with the IUD are rare, and most happen during the first few days. You can use any IUD while breastfeeding.
Can I get an IUD if I’ve never had a baby?	Yes. IUDs are a great choice even if you have not had a baby.
How is the IUD inserted?	After putting a speculum in your vagina, a clinician inserts the IUD into your uterus. Many clinicians give pain medicine first. You may have cramps and spotting for a short time after insertion.
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 condom every time you have sex, even with the IUD in place.
Do I need to check the IUD?	No.
Does the IUD cause an abortion?	No. The IUD prevents sperm from fertilizing eggs.
How do I stop using the IUD?	Your clinician can remove your IUD at any time. If you prefer, you may be able to remove the IUD yourself. You can get pregnant right after the IUD is removed.

Which IUD is right for me?

	Copper IUD 	Hormonal IUDs 	Hormonal IUDs 
Brand names	ParaGard®	Mirena®, Liletta®	Kyleena®, Skyla®
When does the IUD start working?	The copper IUD starts working right away.	These hormonal IUDs start working right away.	These hormonal IUDs start working 7 days after insertion. Use condoms or another back-up method of birth control for the first 7 days after the IUD is inserted to prevent pregnancy.
How do you use it?	It must be placed in the uterus by a clinician. It's usually removed by a clinician. It can be removed at any time.	It must be placed in the uterus by a clinician. It's usually removed by a clinician. It can be removed at any time.	It must be placed in the uterus by a clinician. It's usually removed by a clinician. It can be removed at any time.
How long does it last?	The copper IUD works for 12 years.	Mirena and Liletta work for 8 years.	Skyla works for 3 years. Kyleena works for 5 years.
Does it contain hormones?	No.	Yes. There is a low dose of levonorgestrel but no estrogen. Some people who take testosterone prefer to avoid methods that contain estrogen.	Yes. There is a low dose of levonorgestrel but no estrogen. Some people who take testosterone prefer to avoid methods that contain estrogen.
Effects on bleeding and cramps	Heavier periods Cramps for a few months after insertion Stronger cramps with your period Longer periods	Spotting Cramps for a few months after insertion Lighter periods or no periods after a few months – this is safe.	Spotting Cramps for a few months after insertion Lighter periods or no periods after a few months – this is safe.
Things to know	May lower the risk of uterine lining cancer, ovarian cancer, and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) Can be used as emergency contraception: prevents pregnancy when inserted up to 5 days after unprotected sex	May lower the risk of uterine lining cancer, ovarian cancer, and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) Can be used as emergency contraception: prevents pregnancy when inserted up to 5 days after unprotected sex	May lower the risk of uterine lining cancer, ovarian cancer, and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
Cost	The cost varies based on insurance coverage. Most insurance providers completely cover the cost the IUD. If the IUD is not covered by your insurance, it may cost up to several hundred dollars.	The cost varies based on insurance coverage. Most insurance providers completely cover the cost of the IUD. If the IUD is not covered by your insurance, it may cost up to several hundred dollars. There may be grants or programs to cover the cost of the device if you do not have insurance coverage.	The cost varies based on insurance coverage. Most insurance providers completely cover the cost of the IUD. If the IUD is not covered by your insurance, it may cost up to several hundred dollars.