

Intrauterine devices (coils)

Information for patients

Intrauterine devices (IUDs or 'coil') are popular methods of contraception. There are two types, copper IUDs, or hormonal coils (IUS) of which brands include Mirena[®], also used to control very heavy periods, the three year 'Jaydess' or 5 year Kyleena.

IMPORTANT: If there is any chance of pregnancy either before or after the fit we will NOT be able to proceed on the day.

You must therefore fulfil one of the following criteria:

- 1. If periods are regular but you are not on hormonal contraception**, do NOT have sex from the first day of your normal period until we have fitted the IUD/IUS. You may need to abstain for 7 days after too.
(NOTE: We do not regard condoms as being safe enough and may well advise a short term 'bridging' mini pill to take leading up to the appointment; if you would like to do this please speak to a GP.)
- 2. If you are on a hormonal method of contraception** please continue it as usual. If you have missed any pills we may not be able to proceed on the day.
- 3. If you are not having periods** eg breast feeding or rarely have them for other reasons, you must NOT have sex for three weeks prior to the fit so we can confirm you are not pregnant. (this is another situation where we might give you a mini pill for several weeks, please d/w GP)
- 4. If you already have an IUD/IUS in place and are having a refit** you MUST avoid sex for 7 days prior to the procedure, this is in case we are unable to refit a device or if we are changing types of device. You may be asked to avoid sex for a further 7 days.

Overleaf is further information that you need to be aware of when having an IUD/IUS fitted:

- **Painkillers:** Fitting is usually straightforward, but can be uncomfortable. It may be helpful to take pain killers 1 hour prior to your appointment: preferably 2x200mg ibuprofen, or if not able to 2x500mg paracetamol tablets. The doctor may use a local anaesthetic on your cervix.
- **Pregnancy rates:** for a copper IUD this depends on the type but can be up to 2 per 100 women over 10 years. The Mirena® has a failure rate 1% over 5 years. Of these failures, there is a slightly increased proportion of ectopic pregnancies. Jaydess is less than 1% at 3 years.
- **Bleeding patterns:** With a copper IUD periods may be a little heavier and more painful.
With Mirena®, after a 'settling in' time of up to six months your periods should become much lighter and more infrequent and may stop altogether. A tiny amount of hormone is released into your body; which rarely causes side effects.
- **Complications of IUDs:** These are not common but you do need to be aware.
 - a. Infection can occur, usually in the first three weeks of use. This would normally present with pain, bleeding or discharge. It can usually be treated with antibiotics but occasionally the IUD may need removal. Chlamydia/gonorrhoea tests are offered routinely prior to fitting.
 - b. Expulsion: IUDs occasionally fall out; it is wise to check your threads if you can.
 - c. Perforation of the womb can occur; up to 2 in 1000 fittings, up to 6 times higher if breast feeding.
- **Length of use:** IUDs are licenced for 5-10 years use. Mirena/Kyleena are for 5 years, Jaydess 3 years.
- **After the procedure:** it is not uncommon to feel faint during and after the procedure, so we may ask you to wait for a short period of observation. Extra contraception may be required after for a limited time.
Don't use tampons for two weeks in case you pull the threads out
Please bring a sanitary pad with you in case of light bleeding/spotting.

The following are links to leaflets with extensive information which you are advised to read:

Copper IUD:

<https://www.sexwise.org.uk/contraception/iud-intrauterine-device>

Hormone based IUS:

<https://www.sexwise.org.uk/contraception/ius-intrauterine-system>

You tube video on fitting produced by NHS Lothian:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHRYE2FsXmc>