

# Contraception with an Intrauterine Device (IUD)

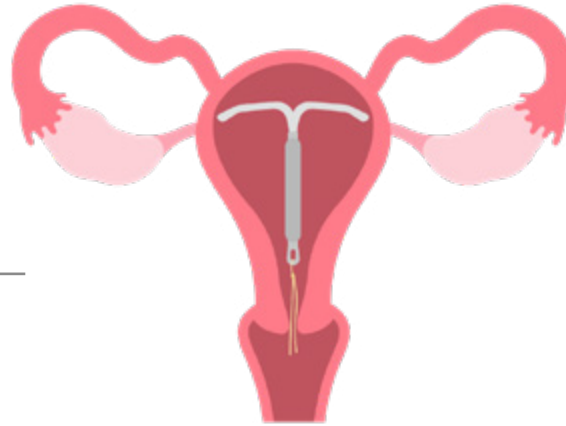


An Intrauterine Device (IUD) is a form of contraception for women who do not wish to take contraceptive pills, insert a diaphragm or opt for a surgical procedure such as tying their tubes (an option once you have completed your family).

## What is an IUD?

An IUD is a small T-shaped device containing either copper or a progesterone hormone put into the uterus to prevent pregnancy. In Australia, we offer two types of IUDs.

- **Copper IUD:** The copper IUD constantly releases small doses of copper into the uterus and works by making the fertilisation of an egg less likely and changing the condition of the uterus lining so that an egg cannot grow. The copper IUD is designed to stay in place for up to 10 years and can be easily removed by your doctor when needed.



- **Hormonal IUD:** The hormonal IUD (also known as Mirena or Kyleena in Australia) slowly releases the progesterone hormone into your uterus and will stay in place for up to five years. The hormonal IUD works by
  - thickening the sperm in the uterus to stop sperm from entering.
  - stopping ovulation in some women.
  - thinning the lining of the uterus so that an egg cannot fertilise

## IMPORTANT

- **Both copper and hormonal IUDs are 99% effective.**
- **Once your doctor removes an IUD, your fertility is promptly restored.**

## IUD insertion

Dr Kothari inserts IUDs during a simple in-office procedure that takes only a few minutes. The procedure begins the same way as a routine pelvic exam. A lubricated speculum is used to gently widen the vaginal canal so your doctor can insert the IUD through the cervical opening. Most women experience a little discomfort - if needed, your doctor may use a local anaesthetic to numb the cervix before insertion. Once the position of the IUD is confirmed, the speculum is removed, and the procedure is complete.

## IMPORTANT

- **Before your procedure, Dr Kothari will need to know your full medical history.**
- **Please let your doctor know if you have/had any health issues.**
- **Arrange for someone to drive you home after the procedure.**
- **To reduce the risk of infection, do not use tampons or have intercourse for 48 hours.**

## What to expect after the IUD is inserted

After the IUD is inserted, it will take your uterus some time to adjust to the new device. Hence, we recommend that you come in for a follow-up appointment after your first period and then once a year to ensure all is well and ensure the IUD is in the right position. Your IUD comes “equipped” with a long tail that extends into your vagina. You may be able to feel it. So, you can always feel for the string to ensure it is still in place.

## NOTE: Please see Dr Kothari if you have any doubts

Before engaging in sex, we recommend you check that the IUD tail is in place because, in some instances (rarely), an IUD can fall out.

## IMPORTANT

If you cannot locate the tail, contact our clinic as soon as possible to schedule an appointment with Dr Kothari. You may need a simple in-office procedure to determine if the IUD is still inside your uterus or has fallen out completely.

## Benefits of IUDs

Some advantages of a copper or hormonal IUD include the following.

- 99% effective in preventing pregnancy.
- Last a long time.
- Not affected by any medications.
- Your chances of falling pregnant will go back to normal once the device is taken out.
- Periods may be less painful with a hormonal IUD.

## Next Steps

More information  
Contact our advice team on  
02 4225 1999

Diagnosis and treatment  
Contact us to book an appointment  
with Dr Kothari  
02 4225 1999

## Possible side effects of IUDs

As with all contraceptive methods, you can expect some side effects with IUDs, such as:

- Period-like cramping when the device is inserted.
- Sometimes the IUD can come out.
- Changes in your periods. Spotting or frequent bleeding for the first three months or a lighter or heavier period.
- One in five women may experience amenorrhoea (period stops).
- A pelvic infection within the first few weeks after the IUD is inserted.
- Risk of Ectopic pregnancy.

## IMPORTANT

If you suspect you are pregnant with an IUD, please see Dr Kothari immediately, as you may be at risk of an ectopic pregnancy which can be life-threatening if not diagnosed and treated in time.

## Treatment costs

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme in Australia covers the cost of a hormonal IUD prescription. You can expect to pay approximately \$43 for the hormonal IUD and less than \$10 if you are a healthcare cardholder. Healthcare cards do not cover the cost of copper IUDs; thus, you can expect to pay between \$70 to over \$100 at the pharmacies.

Depending on the level of treatment and care you require, the cost of the procedure to insert the device will vary from patient to patient. The exact structure of the cost and what you can claim on Medicare and private health insurance can be discussed with your doctor before you undergo any form of surgery.

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