

Facts About Mirena® "IUD" (Intrauterine Devices)



What is Mirena®?

The Mirena® IUD is a long-acting form of birth control. It is a small, t-shaped frame made of flexible plastic that releases a small amount of levonorgestrol (one of the hormones found in the pill). Mirena® prevents pregnancy for five full years.

How well does it work?

Tests show that Mirena® prevents pregnancy more than 99 percent of the time.

How do you use an IUD?

An IUD is put into your uterus by your healthcare provider. After it is put in, you do not need to use another method of birth control. You need to check once a month after your period to make sure the IUD's string is in place.

Why is Mirena® a good choice for me?

Once Mirena® is put in, Mirena® works until you decide you want to have a child. Then you simply ask your healthcare provider to remove the IUD, and you can begin trying to get pregnant right away.

What if I need birth control for more than five years?

Mirena® must be removed after five years, and your healthcare provider can insert a new Mirena® at that time. You can always return to fertility at any time.

Is there anyone who should not use Mirena®?

You should not use Mirena® if you:

- ▲ Think you might be pregnant.
- ▲ Currently have a serious infection called PID (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease).
- ▲ Might have cancer of the uterus or cervix.
- ▲ Have unexplained vaginal bleeding.
- ▲ Have problems with your liver.
- ▲ Have had or now have breast cancer.

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Will I have any problems if I use Mirena®?

Many women who use Mirena® may see a change in how often they bleed each month. Some bleed more. Others bleed small amounts (spotting frequently). After three to six months, your bleeding is likely to decrease, and your periods may even stop altogether.

Are there any warning signs I need to watch for?

If you have any of these warning signs, call your doctor, nurse or clinic right away:

- ▲ You have a late period, spotting or bleeding that doesn't seem right.
- ▲ You have pain when you have sex.
- ▲ You have pain in your stomach or belly.
- ▲ You have a discharge from your vagina that smells bad.
- ▲ You have itching or sores around your vagina.
- ▲ You can't find the IUD's string or the string seems shorter or longer than before.
- ▲ Have unexplained fever or chills.

Where can I get the Mirena® IUD?

You can get it at some health departments, family planning clinics and private doctor offices.

Can I still use tampons?

Yes. Tampons will not change the position of Mirena®.

Will it hurt?

Most women have some discomfort during insertion. Cramps and dizziness may occur.

How long does it take?

The procedure only takes a few minutes.

How often do I need to see my doctor or nurse?

You should visit the clinic in the first three months after insertion to make sure Mirena® is in the right position. After that, Mirena® can be checked once a year as part of your routine gynecological exam.

Remember:

Using Mirena® will not protect you from HIV and other diseases you can get when you have sex. Ask your provider about using latex or polyurethane condoms to protect yourself.

Reference: MMWR, 5/28/10 Vol. 59 Contraceptive Technology 19th ed.



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