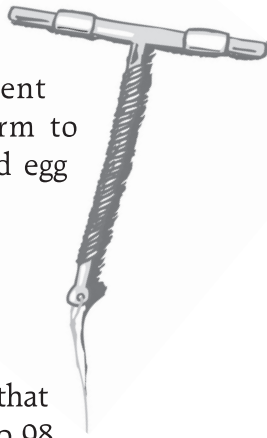


Facts About INTRAUTERINE DEVICES (IUDs)



What is an IUD?

An IUD is a tiny plastic and copper device put in the uterus to prevent pregnancy. The IUD causes sperm to move slowly and keeps a fertilized egg from attaching to the womb.



How well does it work?

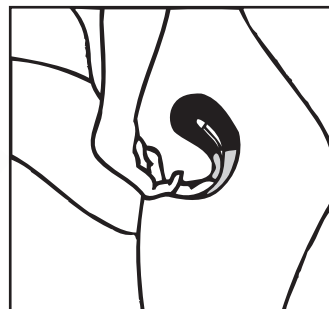
An IUD works very well. Tests show that they prevent pregnancy about 96 to 98 percent of the time.

How do you use an IUD?

An IUD is put in your uterus by a doctor or a nurse. After it is put in, you do not need to do anything when you have sex. The only thing you need to do is check once a month after your period to make sure the IUD's string is in place.

To check your string:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Squat down or stand with one foot on the toilet.
3. Put your index or middle finger high into your vagina and find your cervix. The cervix is the opening to your uterus (womb). It will



feel firm, like the end of your nose.

4. Feel for the string. It will feel small. You may need to ask the nurse or doctor to help you practice before you leave.

5. If you can feel the string, don't do anything.
6. If you cannot feel the string or you are not sure the IUD is in the right place, call your doctor or clinic and use another kind of birth control until your doctor or nurse can examine you.

Why is an IUD a good choice for me?

The IUD can be left in place for a long time (from five years up to ten years depending on the type of IUD you have).

REMEMBER:

Using an IUD will not protect you from getting AIDS or any other disease you can get when you have sex. To protect yourself, use a latex or polyurethane condom each time you have sex.

CONTINUED ON BACK

Facts About INTRAUTERINE DEVICES ("IUDs"), cont.

Is there anyone who should not use an IUD?

The IUD is not for everyone. You should not use an IUD if:

- ▲ You have more than one sexual partner;
- ▲ You have had infections of your female organs;
- ▲ You are pregnant or think you might be;
- ▲ You have had an abnormal Pap smear and have not been treated for it;
- ▲ You have had an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy or have a problem with your uterus (abnormal or unusual uterus); or
- ▲ You are allergic to copper (some IUDs are made of copper).



Will I have problems if I use an IUD?

After you have an IUD put in, you may feel some changes in your body. The IUD may cause you to bleed more when you have your period or cause cramps sometimes. Other problems some women have with IUDs are infection or low blood (anemia).

Are there any warning signs I need to watch for?

Call your doctor or clinic if:

- ▲ 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 abdomen or lower body;
- ▲ You have a discharge from your vagina that smells bad;
- ▲ You have itching or sores around your vagina; or
- ▲ You can't find the IUD's string or if the string seems shorter or longer than before.

Where can I get an IUD?

Some health departments, family planning clinics and private doctor offices.

Can I breastfeed if I have an IUD?

Yes!