

Intrauterine Contraception (IUC)

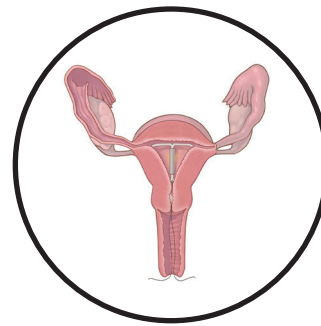
Intrauterine contraceptives (IUCs) are long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods that are used by over 150 million women worldwide. They are the most effective forms of birth control available. IUCs are small T-shaped devices that are inserted in the uterus by a health care professional in a clinic. There are two types of intrauterine contraception: the Copper intrauterine device (Cu-IUD) and the levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine system (LNG-IUS), which contains a progestin.

How does it work?

- LNG-IUS: The small cylinder on the IUC contains the hormone levonorgestrel, which is slowly released. The lining of the uterus becomes thinner and the cervical mucus becomes thicker which makes it harder for sperm to enter the uterus.
- The IUC is inserted by a health professional, in a clinic. The procedure is fairly simple, does not require anaesthesia, and only takes a few minutes.
- Depending on the device, the IUC can remain inserted for 3-10 years, before needing to be replaced.

How effective is it?

- **Typical use failure rate:** 2 of 1000 women during first year of use
- **Perfect use failure rate:** 2 of 1000 women during first year of use
- IUCs are one of the most effective methods of contraception available



Advantages

- + Highly effective, reversible and safe
- + Long term, forgettable and invisible
- + Cost-effective
- + May be suitable for women who cannot take estrogen
- + May be suitable for breastfeeding women
- + Reduces risk of endometrial cancer

Disadvantages

- Initially, irregular bleeding or spotting may occur
- Expensive
- Some pain or discomfort during insertion
- Rare risks with the insertion could include infection, perforation of the uterus, or expulsion of the IUC
- Does not protect against STIs

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Levonorgestrel-Releasing Intrauterine System (LNG-IUS) contains a progestin

Advantages

- + A minimal amount of hormones is absorbed in your blood
- + May reduce menstrual flow and cramps
- + May lead to absence of period
- + Regulates menstrual cycle
- + Improves symptoms of endometriosis

Disadvantages

- Some women may experience hormonal side effects: acne, headaches, breast tenderness, mood issues
- Irregular periods, light or no menstrual periods – which some think of as an advantage, others as a disadvantage