

# Intrauterine Contraceptives (IUCs)

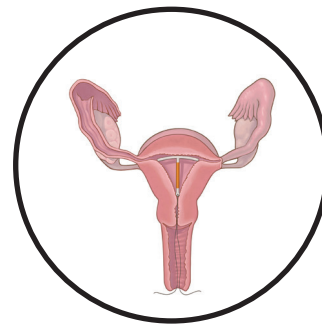
Intrauterine contraceptives (IUCs) are long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods that are used by over 150 million women worldwide. They are the most effective forms of birth control available. IUCs are small T-shaped devices that are inserted in the uterus by a health care professional in 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?

- Cu-IUD: The presence of the foreign body, the IUC itself, creates a hostile environment leading to prevention of a pregnancy.
- 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:** 8 of 1000 women during first year of use
- **Perfect use failure rate:** 8 of 1000 women during first year of use
- IUCs are one of the most effective methods of contraception available



## Advantages

- + Highly effective
- + Reversible, safe and cost-effective
- + Long term, forgettable and invisible
- + 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

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.

## Copper Intrauterine Device (Cu-IUD)

### Advantages

- + May be used as emergency contraception within 7 days of unprotected sex
- + Does not contain hormones

### Disadvantages

- May increase menstrual flow and cramps
- May increase pain during periods