

After IUD Insertion: What you need to know



What is an Intrauterine Device (IUD)?

An intrauterine device (IUD) is a medical device used to treat several gynecological conditions. It is also used for contraception (birth control). An IUD is a small T-shaped device. A healthcare provider inserts it into your uterus.

There are two types of IUDs:

- **Copper IUD:** Does not contain hormones. Immediately effective for contraception.
- **Hormone-releasing IUD (Mirena/Kyleena):** Effective for contraception immediately if inserted within 7 days after starting your period. Otherwise, use another method of birth control for at least 7 days.

When the IUD is in place, there is a string that hangs out of the cervix. The string does not hang out of your vagina. Your health care provider will use the string to check the placement of the IUD and to remove the IUD.

An IUD **DOES NOT** protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

What to expect after the procedure

If you have had sedation medication, you may feel drowsy for the rest of the day.

If you had a general anesthetic:

- You may have an oxygen mask over your nose and mouth when you wake up.
- You may have a sore throat for a few days. This is normal and usually goes away on its own.

What can I do?

- You may not feel like yourself for the first day. Rest in bed until you feel better. **DO NOT** do other activities for the rest of the day.
- If you feel nauseous, try sips of ginger ale and eat some dry crackers. If you feel like eating, try small amounts of foods that are easy to digest, like soups and cereals. Drink lots of fluids for 2-3 days, when you can.

How can I keep myself safe?

- You **MUST** have a responsible person who knows you well to take you home.
- For 24 hours after the procedure:
 - Someone **MUST** stay with you.
 - **DO NOT** drive, operate heavy machinery, or make important decisions
 - **DO NOT** drink alcohol or use recreational substances. The effects will add to those of the procedure medications.

Caring for yourself at home

- **Activity:** On the day of the procedure, rest. You can return to your usual activities the next day.
- **Hygiene:** You may shower any time. Do not go in a bathtub, hot tub, or swimming pool until all bleeding has stopped. This reduces infection your risk of infection, and helps you heal.
- **Pain:** For the first 1-2 days, you may have some cramping. This may feel like menstrual cramps. You can take pain medication. (Please read the next section.) A heating pad on your abdomen can also help.

- **Sexual activity:** Do not put anything in your vagina for at least 24 hours. **Use another method of contraception** (such as a condom) for at least 1 week if a hormone-releasing IUD was inserted.

- **Bleeding:**

If you have a **hormone-releasing IUD:**

- You may have some cramping, frequent spotting, or light bleeding for 2 to 3 months after insertion.
- After your body adjusts to the IUD, your periods may get lighter or stop altogether. This is normal.

If you have a **copper IUD:**

- You may notice increased flow or cramping with your period.
- You can expect your period to come at its usual time.

Pain medication

- Take pain medications only if you need it.
- If you have a prescription, follow the instructions from your doctor and pharmacist
- If you do not have a prescription, you can take the following medications:

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 1000 mg every 6 hours
Next dose at: _____ **am/pm**

AND / OR

Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin): 400 mg every 6 hours
Next dose at: _____ **am/pm**

OR

Naproxen 440 to 500 mg every 12 hours
Next dose at: _____ **am/pm**

NOTE: Naproxen is available without a prescription as 220 mg tablets (take 2 tablets). Prescription Naproxen comes in 500 mg tablets (take 1 tablet).

Do NOT take Naproxen with Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) or Diclofenac (Voltaren).

Gynecologist

Doctor's Sticker Here

Follow-up visit

- Contact your gynecologist's office to make a follow up appointment for 4 – 6 weeks after the procedure. Your gynecologist will check that the IUD is in place.
- Your primary care provider should check your IUD each year, at your check-up visit.
- If the string ever bothers you, ask your primary care provider to check the IUD placement.
- Every month, use one finger to feel the IUD string. If the string is much shorter or longer, or is not there, call your primary care provider.



Contact your Primary Care Provider or go to Emergency if you:

- Have vaginal bleeding that is increasing, heavy (soaks 1 full pad in 1 hour) or lasts longer than 3-4 weeks.
- Have bad-smelling vaginal discharge.
- Have a fever or chills.
- Have severe pain, and pain medication does not help.
- Have nausea or vomiting for more than 24 hours, and you cannot keep fluids down.
- Cannot pee for 8 hours after you leave the hospital.
- Have a positive pregnancy test.

DO NOT go to the Urgent Care Centre at BC Women's as it is ONLY for pregnant patients.