

How to use the LNG-IUD (Hormonal Coil)

Information for patients

An LNG-IUD (levonorgestrel intrauterine device), sometimes known as an IUS, can be fitted as soon as your procedure is complete. It can be inserted during a surgical procedure, immediately after most medical procedures in hospital or between 1-2 weeks after a medical procedure at home. The clinic/ward staff will arrange for a 'Fast track' appointment to a Sexual Health clinic for your LNG-IUD fitting after your medical procedure.

We ask that you visit the Chalmers Sexual Health website www.lothiansexualhealth.scot.nhs.uk and watch a short video regarding the IUS before you attend your appointment. Follow the links from the home page → Contraception → The Coil/IUD or scan this QR code.



The LNG-IUD is used by many women in this country and most of them find it a very satisfactory method of contraception. It is a method of contraception that uses a very low dose of progestogen hormone. Before you make your decision, please read the following information about issues that may arise.

Protection against pregnancy

The LNG-IUD is a very effective method of contraception. There are several types of LNG-IUD - there are 3, 5 and 8 year versions from different manufacturers. They are all more reliable than taking the contraceptive pill and are more effective than using condoms. Once inserted, the LNG-IUD is effective straight away if done in the first 5 days after your procedure; otherwise, condoms should be used for 7 days after insertion.

Effect on menstrual periods

Periods usually get lighter, less painful and often stop. After 12 months, most users only have a light bleed for one day per month, and about 1 in 5 users have no bleeding at all. Fertility returns as soon as it is removed. The action of the IUS is not affected by any medications.

Most women find that there may be some spotting or irregularity for the first few months after the LNG-IUD has been inserted, but this settles down.

If you become pregnant with an IUS

If you become pregnant with the LNG-IUD in the womb, there is a possible increased risk of ectopic. The chance of having an ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outwith the womb) with the LNG-IUD is overall lower than if you did not use contraception (because this device is so effective) but if you become pregnant with an LNG-IUD, half of these small number of pregnancies would be ectopic.

Other issues

- Having an LNG-IUD inserted is generally a moderately uncomfortable but quick procedure. Discuss this with the nurse or doctor if you are worried.
- Occasionally an LNG-IUD can fall out. This is more likely to happen in the first 3 months after insertion (risk is 1 in 20). The nurse will teach you how to check for the small threads in your vagina. Neither you nor your partner will be aware of the threads during sexual intercourse.
- There is a very rare possibility that the womb will be perforated during the insertion procedure (up to 2 in 1000).

Safer sex

The LNG-IUD does not protect you from sexually transmitted infection. Use condoms with new partners and test regularly.

If you have any problems, do not hesitate to contact us.

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