

Instructions for users of hormonal intrauterine devices

General

A hormonal intrauterine device (IUD) steadily releases progestin into the uterus, which causes the cervical mucus to thicken so sperm cannot migrate into the uterus. Ovulation usually occurs normally and ovarian hormone activity will remain unchanged. The T-shaped hormonal IUD is made of flexible plastic and can be located using ultrasound.

At the beginning of a new sexual relationship, both parties need to take tests for sexually transmitted diseases before giving up the use of condoms.

Inserting the IUD

A doctor or a nurse inserts the hormonal IUD. The device is usually inserted within seven days after the onset of menstruation. If you have been on mini-pills prior to the insertion of a hormonal IUD, the device can be inserted at any time during the menstrual cycle. When the hormonal IUD is inserted within seven days after the onset of menstruation, it will prevent pregnancy immediately. If the insertion takes place at another stage of the menstrual cycle, you are advised to use condoms as a backup method for seven days.

The insertion is usually a quick procedure. It may cause you transient pain which is not unlike period pain. You are advised to take a painkiller (such as ibuprofen 600 mg) prior to the insertion.

Removing the IUD

You need to remember to have the hormonal IUD removed. The hormonal IUD has at its end two strings for the removal of the device. In connection with the removal, you can have a new hormonal IUD inserted at the same time.

Benefits

The hormonal IUD can reduce the amount of menstrual bleeding and relieve period pain. After the insertion, spotting may occur, but within 3-6 months, in most cases, the spotting will have stopped. In some women, the periods will cease completely, which is harmless. The menstrual cycle will return to normal once the device is removed. The hormonal IUD is also suitable for women who cannot use contraceptives that contain estrogen (for instance, women who suffer from migraines with aura).

Side effects

The occurrence of side effects is individual and for the majority of users there are none at all or they are mild. The most common side effects are irregular spotting, breast tenderness, headaches, oily skin and mood changes. It is usual that the initial symptoms subside during the first months of use, but spotting may occur for a longer time. Irregular vaginal bleeding is not a sign of the contraceptive effect of the IUD becoming weaker. You should continue using the device for at least six months.

Your hormonal IUD is: _____

Date the IUD was inserted: _____

Date the IUD has to be removed or changed by: _____

Contact health care

- After the insertion, if the bleeding is heavy or you have fever or you have severe pain not relieved by painkillers
- If notable bleeding or spotting continues after six months of use
- If new unexplained bleeding occurs during the use of IUD