

IUD INSTRUCTIONS

- Check string once a month and contact the clinic to report missing or elongated strings.
- Keep track of any bleeding and contact the clinic to report any delayed menstrual period or signs/symptoms of pregnancy. Vaginal bleeding or spotting is not unusual, especially with Mirena.
- Call the clinic to report:
 - if you use more than one tampon or pad per hour for 4 hours in a row or if you bleed heavily for more than three days of your period
 - any foul smelling vaginal discharge
 - lower abdominal pain or cramping, or if you have severe cramping every month
 - pain with intercourse (sex)
 - fever or chills
 - able to feel the IUD
 - elongated string or no string
- If you feel your IUD or have any doubts about the presence or proper placement of your IUD, use an additional contraceptive method (i.e., condoms, foam, etc.) and contact the clinic for an appointment.
- Return to the clinic for an exam in one month, then annually. Please call to schedule these appointments.
- Your IUD will expire _____. Please call in advance of this date to schedule removal and/or replacement.

Optional Menstrual Calendar

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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SIDE EFFECTS

Some women cannot even tell they have an IUD and don't have any effects. Other women have changes in their bodies. Here are some of the more common side effects and what you can do about them.

Cramping—Some women with IUD's have more painful menstrual periods. Others have cramping off and on all the time. Self Care (what you can do yourself about it): a heating pad or a hot bath can be very effective. Non prescription pain medications like ibuprofen are often helpful.

Bleeding—The IUD can cause spotting that comes and goes. It can also cause heavier menstrual periods. Sometimes ibuprofen can help stop bleeding. Sometimes health care providers prescribe hormones to try to stop the bleeding. Sometimes if you wait, it will go away by itself. Sometimes nothing works. But, if you have bleeding with intercourse or a lot more menstrual bleeding than in the past, contact us.

Changes in sexuality—A few women with the hormonal IUD have a lowered sex drive, vagina dryness, or find it harder to have orgasms. These effects can be due to the progestin in the IUD. There may be things going on in your life that could affect your sex drive such as amount of sleep, how you feel about your body and your relationship. For vaginal dryness, you can use a water-based personal lubricant found in any pharmacy, like astro-glide or KY jelly. If you feel comfortable talking to your health care provider, it can be very helpful to discuss these changes to sort out causes and problem-solve solutions.

No menstrual periods—This happens to many women with the hormonal IUD. For some women, it is a welcome effect. Others feel uncomfortable with it and like their monthly cycle. Others prefer the reassurance that they are not pregnant which a monthly menstrual period provides. There are no treatments to bring back your menstrual cycle except having the IUD removed. If you are not having a period with a copper IUD, contact us. Pregnancy is rare with the IUD, but it can happen. It is a good idea to do a pregnancy test if you have any pregnancy signs such as tender breasts, nausea, increased appetite or weight gain.

Reminder: You can have your IUD removed at any time if the side-effects are too problematic for you.

When to have it checked: We recommend returning to the clinic in about a month so that you can learn how to feel the IUD string and be able to check if it is in place. If you are interested, we can also show you how to check your string at home with a mirror and a plastic speculum. After that, all you need is your usual yearly physical exam.