



Information for  
patients and  
carers

**Intrauterine Contraception  
at the time of a Caesarean Section**

## Contraception after having a baby

Women can get pregnant again as early as 3 weeks after childbirth and therefore it is recommended that effective contraception is started as soon as possible after delivery. There are a variety of options which can be discussed with you by your doctors and midwives. This leaflet will focus on the use of an intrauterine device.

### What is Intrauterine Contraception?

Intrauterine contraception (IUC), commonly known as a “coil” is one of the most effective ways of preventing or delaying a further pregnancy. The failure rate of intrauterine contraception is less than 1% (for every 200 women who have a coil fitted it will only result in pregnancy for 1).

There are two types

- A coil **with** hormones for example, a Mirena© or Levosert©
  - This device secretes a hormone that mimics your body’s natural progesterone. This acts locally on the womb to thin the lining of your womb which prevents an egg from implanting. It also thickens the mucus in the cervix to prevent sperm reaching an egg. Women will often have lighter periods
- A coil **without** hormones
  - This contains copper which creates an unfavourable environment in the uterus for sperm. As there are no hormones in this device, women will continue to get periods which sometimes may become slightly heavier, longer or more painful

It is your decision which device you would prefer. However there are some situations where a device may not be suitable and your doctor will be able to discuss this with you.

After the coil is inserted there will be threads at the top of the vagina. These allow you to check the coil is still present and aid removal.

## Advantages of Intrauterine Contraception

- Provides immediate contraception - works straight after being fitted
- Quick - only adds a few minutes to your surgery time
- Convenient - can be done during your operation
- Safe to use while breast feeding
- Hormone coil can lighten or stop menstrual bleeding
- Long lasting - depending on the type of intrauterine contraception used they can last for between 3 -10 years

## What are the side effects or risks?

Infection	There is a very small risk of a pelvic infection in the first 21 days after insertion. Contact your GP if you experience offensive discharge or pelvic pain.
Hormone effects	7 in 100 women experience headaches, oily skin, breast tenderness, nausea or mood swings. These symptoms usually last for 3 months. The hormonal intrauterine device does <b>not</b> usually cause weight gain.
Expelled	1 in 20 IUC can be pushed out (expelled). This is most likely to happen in the first month.
Lost Threads	1 in 100 women experience lost threads. This may make changing the IUC more challenging however, as long as the coil is present it will be effective for contraception.
Ectopic pregnancy	If you do become pregnant with intrauterine contraception the risk of an ectopic pregnancy is slightly higher. This is where the pregnancy develops outside the uterus and can have potentially severe consequences. We advise you to contact your GP if you become pregnant with intrauterine contraception in place.

## How is an IC fitted and what happens afterwards?

The ICU is placed in the uterus after the baby and placenta are born and before the cut on the uterus is closed.

We encourage women to 'self-check' that they can feel their threads around 4 weeks after fitting. This can be done by inserting a clean finger inside the vagina until you can reach the cervix which is the entrance to your womb. It will feel firm and rubbery like the tip of your nose. With your finger see if you can feel your threads coming down through the centre of the cervix. Be careful not to pull them.

It is important to check the device and/or trim the threads 4 to 6 weeks after fitting. This can be done in the contraceptive clinics. To contact this clinic and arrange an appointment, telephone 0300 1234 154.

If you cannot feel your threads or the threads are coming out of the vagina you can also email – [PPIUD@lthtr.nhs.uk](mailto:PPIUD@lthtr.nhs.uk) leaving your name, date of birth and date of delivery with a brief outline of what you have found. An appointment will be made for you to see the clinician

## Removal

The ICU can be removed in most GP or sexual health clinics by pulling on the threads during a vaginal examination. Removal is not usually painful.

## What should I do next?

If you are keen to have an ICU fitted at the time of your Caesarean section, please inform your doctor or midwife. This will be added to your consent form.

## Contact details

If you have any more questions please discuss these with the doctor or midwife looking after you.

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/)

[www.fsrh.org/news/new-fsrh-guideline--contraception-after-pregnancy/](http://www.fsrh.org/news/new-fsrh-guideline--contraception-after-pregnancy/)

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

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If you want to stop smoking you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

**Gujarati:**

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણામાં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

**Romanian:**

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

**Polish:**

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

**Punjabi:**

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

**Urdu:**

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو یی چھپا یں یبھ ابی دست بو یسکت ہے برا ے مہر یان پو ے یچھہ ی۔ معلومات

**Arabic:**

مطوبه با حر ف كبير ة و بلغات إذا كنت تر يد مسا عدة في فهم هذه لمعلومات يُر جى أن تطلب أخرى يملكن تو فسير هذه المعلوما

**Department:** Obstetrics and Gynaecology

**Division:** Women and Children

**Production date:** July 2021

**Review date:** July 2024

**JR641 v1**