

## What is intrauterine contraception (IUC)?

The IUC is a small T-shaped device that is placed in the uterus to prevent pregnancy.

### How long does it last?

The ParaGard IUC can prevent pregnancy for as long as 10 years. The Mirena IUC can prevent pregnancy for as long as 5 years. The Skyla IUC prevents pregnancy as long as 3 years. The Liletta can prevent pregnancy for as long as 3 years.

### How effective is it?

IUCs are one of the most effective forms of birth control. Less than 1% of women who use IUCs will get pregnant in one year.

### What are the benefits of the IUCs?

- ParaGard is hormone free.
- All 4 IUCs can be used by women who can't or don't want to use estrogen.
- All are very effective forms of birth control.
- Convenient: "Get it and forget it."
- Safe for breastfeeding women
- Private: No one knows you are using birth control.
- Mirena is approved by the FDA to treat heavy periods.

### When can I start having sex after I get my IUC?

ParaGard IUC is effective in preventing pregnancy right after it is placed.

If a Mirena, Skyla or Liletta is placed within seven days of the start of a normal period, no added protection is needed. Otherwise, use an additional birth control method or do not have sex for seven days after insertion.

# Intrauterine Contraception



### Will my partner feel the IUC during sex?

Neither you nor your partner should be able to feel the IUC. Call your health care provider if you have any concerns.

### How do I know if it's in the right place?

The IUC has two small strings that you can feel at your cervix at the top of the vagina. Feel for these strings frequently when you first get your IUC and then at least once a month. If you can feel the strings, the IUC is in place. If not, it may be out of place. Call your health care provider.

### What if I want to stop using the IUC or want to get pregnant?

Your health care provider can take out the IUC at any time. As soon as the IUC is taken out, you will be able to get pregnant. If you do not want to get pregnant right away, you will need to use another method of birth control.

## What are common side effects of the IUC?

Within the first five days, you may have cramps, pain and bleeding. If your health care provider says it is OK, you may take Ibuprofen.

ParaGard may make your periods heavier or longer with more cramps. This is a normal side effect that can be helped by using an over-the-counter pain medicine (like Ibuprofen) during your period.

Women have irregular spotting or bleeding with Mirena, Skyla and Liletta. Some women eventually stop bleeding altogether. Ovarian cysts may occur, but generally go away on their own.

Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions or concerns about side effects.

### Warning Signs:

Call the clinic immediately if you:

- Experience unexplained fever or chills
- Have severe abdominal or pelvic pain and cramping
- Have severe or prolonged bleeding
- See abnormal vaginal discharge
- Can't feel the IUD strings or if you feel the plastic part of the IUD
- Think you may be pregnant.

Some of these symptoms can be signs of rare but serious and sometimes life threatening problems such as infection or ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy in a fallopian tube) that require care by a health care provider.

The IUD does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as HIV. Always use a condom to help protect yourself from HIV and other STIs.