

After Your IUD is Placed

What to expect and when to call

What can I expect?

It is normal to have unusual bleeding, spotting, and mild cramping for 3 to 6 months after your IUD is placed. These symptoms usually improve over time. If your bleeding or cramping is not getting better, or if you have heavy bleeding or strong pelvic pain, call our office right away.

Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, and others) helps decrease pain and cramping. You can buy ibuprofen at any drugstore without a prescription. Take 3 tablets (200 mg each) by mouth every 6 hours as needed for pain and cramping. Do **not** take more than 12 tablets in 24 hours. Be sure to take ibuprofen with food.

What problems should I watch out for?

- The IUD can sometimes fall out (*be expelled* from the uterus).
 - If you have heavy bleeding or pain, check with your fingers to make sure you can still feel the IUD strings. Do **not** pull on the strings, since you could remove the IUD. If you cannot feel the strings, call our office.
 - If you are not having symptoms that concern you, you do not need to check your IUD strings.
- The IUD is a very good form of birth control, but no form of birth control is perfect. If you have nausea, breast tenderness, pelvic pain, or unexpected bleeding, you may be pregnant. If you have these signs, call our office.
- Women who have an IUD can get pelvic infections. Call us right away if you have pain in your pelvis or lower abdomen, unusual vaginal discharge, or a fever higher than 100.4°F (38°C), if it is not caused by another illness.
- See your healthcare provider for yearly exams, and have all routine screening tests. An IUD does not protect against sexually transmitted infections.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Keep these instructions so you can refer to them as needed. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about your IUD.

- UWMC Maternal and Infant Care Clinic:** 206.598.4070
1959 N.E. Pacific St.
Seattle, WA 98195
- UWMC Women's Health Care Center:** 206.598.5500
4245 Roosevelt Way N.E.
Seattle, WA 98195
- UWPC Northgate Family Medicine:** 206.528.8000
314 NE Thornton Pl
Seattle, WA 98125
- Harborview Family Medicine Clinic at the Pat Steele Building:**
206.744.8274, option 2
401 Broadway, Suite 2018
Seattle, WA 98104
- Women's Clinic at Harborview:**
206.744.3367
325 Ninth Ave., Ground Floor,
West Clinic, Seattle, WA 98104

When should the IUD be removed?

An IUD can be removed at any time. IUDs are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for up to a certain number of years, but in some cases the IUD can be used for a longer period of time. It is important that you talk about this with your healthcare provider.

Here are the number of years each IUD can be used:

- **Paragard IUD:** 12 years after it is placed (approved by the FDA for 10 years)
- **Liletta IUD:** 8 years after it is placed (approved by the FDA for 6 years)
- **Mirena IUD:** 8 years after it is placed (approved by the FDA for 8 years)
- **Kyleena IUD:** 5 years after it is placed (approved by the FDA for 5 years)
- **Skyla IUD:** 3 years after it is placed (approved by the FDA for 3 years)

When should I call my healthcare provider?

Call your healthcare provider if you:

- Have heavy bleeding
- Feel strong or sharp pain in your pelvis or lower abdomen
- Have vaginal discharge that smells bad
- Feel pain when you have sex
- Have a fever above 100.4°F (38°C) that you cannot explain
- Think you might be pregnant
- Want to have the IUD removed