



## **IUD (Intrauterine Device) Fact Sheet**

### **What are IUD's?**

- Made of flexible plastic (in the shape of a "T") with a plastic string at the bottom of the IUD
- They are placed into a woman's uterus by a medical provider
- Available in 3 types, only by prescription:
  1. ParaGard
    - Copper, hormone-free
    - In place for up to 10 years
  2. Mirena & Kyleena
    - Progestin-releasing
    - In place for up to 5 years
  3. Skyla & Liletta
    - Progestin-releasing
    - In place for up to 3 years
- Contraception is immediately effective upon insertion and immediately reversed upon removal

### **How do IUD's work?**

- They prevent fertilization
- They may immobilize sperm
- They may increase rate of speed of egg through tubes (moves too fast to be fertilized)
- Copper-based IUD may increase amount of prostaglandins that support pregnancy. The copper-based IUD also causes the body to make specific cells in the body that attack and kill sperm.
- Progestin-based IUD thickens cervical mucus to prevent sperm from entering uterus

Note – A woman must be willing to check for the string to verify that the IUD is still in place.

*With any change in string length or position, the chance of pregnancy is increased.*

### **Who might be able to use an IUD?**

- Someone wanting a long term, reversible, and very effective (approximately 99.4%) form of birth control
- Someone who cannot take The Pill daily
- Someone who prefers a Progestin releasing IUD, for help with heavy periods and severe cramps

### **Who might prefer non- hormonal IUD's to hormonal forms of contraception?**

The above conditions, plus:

- Someone who is currently breastfeeding
- Someone who cannot use hormonal methods of birth control (such as The Pill) because of cigarette smoking or certain health conditions (i.e. hypertension)

**You should not use an IUD if you:**

- Are at risk for contracting a sexually transmitted disease
- Have been diagnosed with pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), gonorrhea, or chlamydia within the past 12 months
- Are pregnant
- Had postpartum endometriosis or an infection following an abortion in the past 3 months
- Have untreated vaginal or cervical infections or have abnormal vaginal bleeding
- Have cancer of the cervix or uterus or have had abnormal pap test results
- Have certain abnormalities of the cervix or uterus that would make insertion difficult or dangerous
- Already have an IUD that hasn't been removed
- Don't have access to medical care in case problems develop
- Have other medical conditions that would create health problems if you were to get an IUD
- Someone who is not at risk for contracting a sexually transmitted infection
- Someone who has not been diagnosed with pelvic inflammatory disease, gonorrhea, or chlamydia within the last 12 months

**Possible side effects of using the IUD:**

- Increased cramping during menstrual periods
- Heavier than usual menstrual periods (copper IUD)
- Increased risk for ectopic (tubal) pregnancy
- Increased risk for infection during the first few months after IUD insertion
- Changes in menstrual bleeding patterns (mostly when using hormonal IUD's) during the first 3-6 months, with less menstrual bleeding over time

**Side effects occurring in fewer than 5% of women using hormonal IUD's:**

- Acne or other skin problems
- Back pain
- Breast tenderness
- Headache
- Mood changes
- Nausea