

# A guide to IUD (Coil): Intrauterine Device



## What is a coil and who is it suitable for?

The contraceptive coil is a small device which sits inside the womb to prevent pregnancy. It is suitable for almost every woman considering having one fitted (IUD, IUS, Intra Uterine Device) for contraceptive purposes.

## Who is it not suitable for?

Those who have previously suffered an ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy which was located outside of the womb) and women who are susceptible to ectopic pregnancy should also avoid the coil.

It may not be suitable for some women with fibroids or previous surgery as it needs to be fitted into the cavity of the womb. If the cavity is an abnormal shape, it may not be possible to fit the coil or it is at risk of falling out.

## What are the types to choose from?

There are two types of coil to choose from, the copper coil and the hormonal coil. At London Gynaecology we offer the 'Nova T380' copper coil or hormonal coils called 'Mirena', 'Kyleena' or 'Jaydess'.

### The hormonal coil:

- It can help make your periods less painful - some women have a hormonal coil fitted to treat their heavy & painful periods alone.
- Some women have a hormonal coil purely for treatment of heavy & painful periods.
- The progesterone released from the hormonal coil has the added effect of making periods very light and some women will not experience periods at all.
- Mirena and Kyleena coils can stay in for up to 5 years.
- Jaydess coil is a slightly smaller coil and has less hormone, it can stay in for up to 3 years.

### The copper coil:

- Non-hormonal coil offers the advantage of a 'fit and forget' type of convenient and reliable contraception without any hormonal effects.
- You will have your period - some women like this reassurance.
- The 'Nova T380' copper coil can stay in for up to 5 years.

## Can It be easily removed, and will it affect my ability start a family?

If your life changes and you want to fall pregnant or change contraceptive, it can be easily removed by a gentle internal examination to pull on some very thin threads which can be seen at the opening of your womb (cervix). When the coil is removed, your ability to fall pregnant will be restored to normal.

## Before your coil fitting appointment

- Is there a risk of pregnancy? Please discuss with the doctor.
- Use additional contraception for 7 days if you are having a coil change.
- Take paracetamol 2x500mg tablets (or similar pain relief medication) 30 minutes before your appointment time.
- We advise patients to make sure you have eaten before the procedure.
- It is preferable if you time the appointment during or just after you have had a period.

## How is it fitted and what happens on the day?

On the day a speculum will be placed inside your vagina and anaesthetic gel applied to your cervix. Sometimes a local anaesthetic injection is also used. The coil is gently inserted inside the cavity of the womb in a tube which is the size of a very thin cocktail straw. This tube is then removed leaving the coil in place.

The insertion takes only a few seconds. We offer an ultrasound scan to confirm that the coil is safely in the correct position. It is usual to experience some lower abdominal pain similar to a period like cramp. There may also be some bleeding but this is often light in nature.

## Is the fitting painful?

It can be uncomfortable, but most people tolerate it very well with the use of local anaesthetic gel and sometimes an injection. Women who have had a vaginal birth may find it even easier as their cervix has been 'stretched open' in the past. For young women or those who have not had a baby, they may opt for the Jaydess or Kyleena coil as these are slightly smaller. Any cramping pain and bleeding may continue for a few days but should then resolve. The pain should improve slowly and stop within 3-4 days. You can use paracetamol and/or ibuprofen.

## How can I expect to feel afterwards?

It is normal to have some cramping pains afterwards and some women may need to take some painkillers. We recommend that you wait for 20 minutes in the clinic after the coil fitting.

It is not uncommon to experience light bleeding and abdominal cramps for a few days afterwards.

## Are there any side effects or risks?

All contraceptive methods can fail and there is a small risk of pregnancy. With the coil, if pregnancy should occur, there is a higher risk of an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy and an early ultrasound scan is recommended. Infection is also a risk, and we may prescribe prophylactic single dose antibiotics if appropriate. Rarely, the coil can move and may either get expelled or migrate into the tummy cavity.

### Hormonal coil:

- Women may experience irregular bleeding but this usually settles down over the first 2-3 months.
- Some women have side effects from progesterone which may affect mood, skin or bloating from fluid retention.

### Copper coil:

- For women choosing the copper coil, they may find their periods are slightly heavier.

## Can I use tampons or the moon cup?

- Tampons and moon cups are safe to use after a coil has been inserted. It is important to break the seal first of the moon cup prior to removing it from your vagina.

Practising at the following locations:

— THE PORTLAND HOSPITAL  
212 Great Portland Street  
London W1W 5QN

— CITY OF LONDON  
15 Austin Friars  
London EC2N 2HE

To book an appointment please contact:

**020 7101 1700 (24hrs)**

[contact@london-gynaecology.com](mailto:contact@london-gynaecology.com)

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## Can I have sex after?

If the hormonal coil has been inserted, some women may be advised to use additional contraception for 7 days after the fitting, this will be explained to you at your appointment if that is the case. For the majority of women it is safe to start having sex when you feel comfortable.

## Can I feel the coil after?

You should not notice the coil is in place once it has been inserted. We encourage you to check that the coil has not fallen out (a rare complication which is more common soon after the fitting). Your doctor will demonstrate how you can do this.

## Summary:

1. Once your coil is fitted, there is no need to think about contraception for 3-5 years.
2. The protection from pregnancy each year is 99.4%.
3. For some, there are added benefits to the coil as you can choose a coil that contains the hormone progesterone.
4. The protection from pregnancy from hormonal coils is even more reliable at 99.8%.
5. Coils are more protective than other methods including the pill, condoms and hormonal coils are even slightly more protective. (Please note, coils do not protect from sexually transmitted infections and therefore you may need to use condoms to protect from infection as well).



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