

Oak Bay Medical Centre

Copper IUD INFORMATION SHEET

Benefits:

Copper IUDs are great because they have no hormones and you don't have to worry about remembering them. They work right away, are not too expensive and last for 2-5 years (Nova T is 2.5 years, Flexi T and UT 380 are 5 years). Most women like them, but some have heavier periods and increased period cramping.

Pregnancy:

A pregnancy test will only check for a pregnancy that conceived over 2 weeks ago or more. It will NOT tell us about any conception in the last 1-2 weeks. If you think you *could have* conceived in the last 2-3 weeks, re-book for 2 weeks from today, and don't have sex until after appointment. The receptionist will review with you whether a pregnancy test is needed or not.

Insertion:

Inserting the IUD is a simple clinic procedure. The doctor will examine you to see which way the uterus is positioned and then insert a speculum (like the one used for a PAP). The doctor may offer you freezing in the cervix. Next, the doctor will hold the cervix while sliding the IUD into your uterus. Most women feel a pinch (holding the cervix) and a cramp (IUD going in). Cramping may last a few minutes. You may take some ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) before or after your insertion to reduce your cramps. Sometimes a hot water bottle also helps. It is rare for anything to go wrong during the insertion (e.g. the doctor going too deep, called perforation) or not at all (e.g. can't get in through a very tight cervix).

NOTE: if you did not take ibuprofen and want some, ask the receptionist when arriving at the office.

After insertion:

For 24 hours after insertion, it is important not to insert anything into the vagina for 24 hours (i.e. no tampons, bath, swimming, hot tub, sexual intercourse). There is about 1% chance of the copper IUD slipping, and the chance is highest in the first few weeks. There is also about 1% chance of infection, so don't have a new sexual partner in the first 3-4 weeks.

Slipping or Expelling the IUD:

We recommend that you regularly feel high in the vagina for the string of the IUD. If you can't feel it, that's OK, but if the string lengthens, or if you feel it now and then can't later, see us or your own doctor right away. Usually you will get lots of cramping and/or bleeding if your IUD is falling out.

Contraception:

The copper IUD can be used as a "morning after" device for 5-7 days, and is immediately effective as contraception. ****Remember that the IUD does not protect you against sexually transmitted infections (STI), so use a condom with a new partner, until you are sure you are both free of STIs**.** Let the doctor know if you want an STI test today.