

IUD with hormones



What to expect during the first few months:

While your body is getting used to a hormonal IUD, it's normal to have:

- **Bleeding** – you may have bleeding even when you don't have your period during the first few months after getting an IUD. This bleeding could be heavy, like a period, or very light. This will get better with time.

What you can do: keep panty liners in your bag. It is a good idea to have these around in case you have bleeding when you don't expect to.

- **Cramps** – you may have cramps during the first few months after getting an IUD. This will get better with time.

What you can do: take pain medicine like Motrin or Advil, or lie down with a hot towel or heating pad on your stomach.

- **Pain during or after sex** – you may feel pain during or after sex after getting an IUD. This will get better with time.

What you can do: change positions during sex.

- **Other changes** – you may notice changes in your mood or the way your body feels. Your body is getting used to the hormone that is in your IUD. This will get better in time.

What you can do: wait 3-6 months to feel better. Most people notice these changes less over time.

While you have an IUD with hormones:

- **Your period may be lighter, less regular, or stop** – most people who use hormonal IUDs have shorter and lighter periods. Your periods may also become less regular. After one year of using an IUD with hormones, many people stop getting a period completely.
- **Check your strings once a month** – two strings are attached to the bottom of your IUD. You can feel these strings by placing your finger far inside your vagina.

- **If you can't feel the strings with your finger** – it is okay if you can't feel the strings for a few days. Sometimes they are hard to feel because they are so far inside the vagina. Try squatting down or ask a partner to help.
- **If your partner feels them during sex** – most partners will feel the strings less over time. You or your partner can push the strings further back with your finger or try changing positions during sex.

You should call your doctor if you:

- **Can't feel your strings for more than one week** – sometimes you won't be able to feel your strings with your finger because they can get pushed behind the cervix (located at the back of the vagina). This is normal, but if one week goes by and you still can't feel your strings, call your doctor.
- **Feel the plastic tip of the IUD** – this means that the IUD is starting to come out and is not working as well to prevent pregnancy. You will need to go to the doctor so the IUD can be fixed. Use a back-up method, like condoms, and make an appointment with your doctor as soon as possible.
- **Have bad smelling vaginal discharge** – it is normal for vaginal discharge to change after you get an IUD, but if the discharge smells bad or is yellowish, greenish, clumpy, or feels itchy, call your doctor. This may mean that you have an infection.
- **Have very bad cramps or pain that won't go away with medicine** – it is normal to have some cramping for a few months after getting an IUD, but if the pain is very bad or won't go away with medicine, call your doctor.

Why you should still use condoms:

- The IUD is one of the best ways to prevent pregnancy, but it does not protect you against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). It's important to keep using condoms even after you have your IUD. It is also important to make sure that you and your partner both get tested regularly for STIs.
- Using condoms also makes your IUD even better at preventing pregnancy!

Talk to your CHN health educator if you have more questions!



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