INTRAUTERINE DEVICE (IUD)

The copper IUD is a T-shaped plastic device wrapped in copper wire. The hormonal IUD is a T-shaped plastic device that contains 52 milligrams of levonorgestrel (progestin hormone). Both are long-acting reversible contraceptive methods. The copper IUD is effective for 10 years and the hormonal IUD is effective for three to five years. This method must be inserted and removed by a trained provider and does not contain estrogen.

MECHANISM OF ACTION

The IUD works by preventing fertilization. The copper IUD releases copper ions into the uterine cavity which are toxic to the sperm entering the uterus and fallopian tubes. The hormonal IUD releases 20 micrograms of levonorgestrel each day which thickens the cervical mucus and inhibits sperm movement and viability. Both IUDs affect the endometrial lining and may prevent implantation of a fertilized egg. However, the primary mechanism of action for the IUD is to prevent fertility earlier in the reproduction process before the egg reaches the uterus. Insufficient evidence exists to support the main mechanism of action is destruction of the fertilized egg.

METHOD EFFECTIVENESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implant</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male sterilization</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female sterilization</td>
<td>99.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injectable</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pill</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male condom</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No method</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Method effectiveness is the percent of women NOT experiencing pregnancy within the first year of use of each method.

It’s a common misconception that IUDs:

...INCUR THE RISK OF PELVIC INFLAMMATORY DISEASE (PID)

RESEARCH SHOWS the rate of PID is the same as the general population. The risk is greatest in the first 20 days after insertion.

...INCREASE THE RISK OF ECTOPIC PREGNANCY

RESEARCH SHOWS the rate of ectopic pregnancy for IUD users is about one-tenth lower than non-contraceptive users.

...CAUSE INFERTILITY

RESEARCH SHOWS that after discontinuing use, women promptly return to their previous state of fertility. Approximately 71%-96% of women report a desired pregnancy within the first year.

...ARE NOT SAFE FOR YOUTH

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION deems contraception appropriate for youth and states no medical reason to deny contraception based solely on age.

IUD Use in South Asia

Approximately 20 million women are using an IUD in South Asia. If the IUD was banned in the Philippines, approximately **596,000 women would be at risk** of an unintended pregnancy if they chose no other method.

NUMBER OF WOMEN USING IUDS (IN THOUSANDS)

- Less than 100
- 100-1,000
- 1,000-5,000
- More than 5,000
INTRAUTERINE DEVICE (IUD)

SOURCES


Farley et al., “Intrauterine Devices and Pelvic Inflammatory Disease.”


Russo, Miller, and Gold, “Myths and Misconceptions About Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC).”

Stoddard, McNicholas, and Peipert, “Efficacy and Safety of Long-Acting Reversible Contraception.”


Method Effectiveness

Note: Estimates are based on a typical couple’s use of the method. Estimates for perfect use of the method are higher.


Number of Women Using IUDs