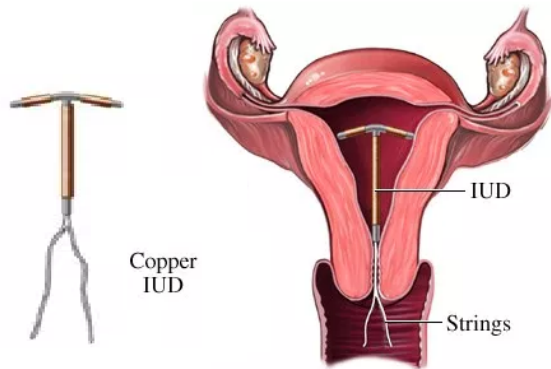


# Copper IUD

## Disadvantages

- It doesn't protect against sexually transmissible infections (STIs)
- It requires a procedure to be put in and removed from the uterus; putting it in can be uncomfortable
- When the IUD is put in there is a small chance of:
  - difficulty inserting the IUD
  - damage to the wall of the uterus
  - infection
- It can sometimes come out by itself
- Your periods can be heavier and last longer
- You can have some irregular spot bleeding in the first few months



## How do I get a Copper IUD?

Only a specially trained doctor or nurse can put in an IUD. You may need to make two visits.

- the doctor or nurse will ask questions about your health
- you might have a vaginal examination, a cervical screening test or a test for infection

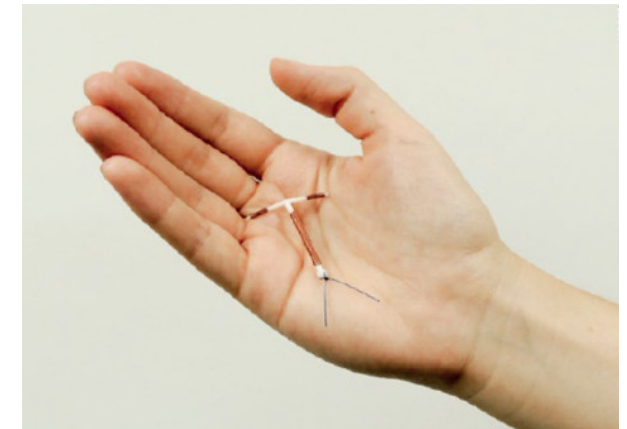
- putting the IUD in takes about 10 minutes
- you may find it uncomfortable or painful and some women feel faint
- you can have a local anaesthetic
- some women have the IUD inserted under sedation

## After your Copper IUD is put in

- you may have cramps and bleeding or spotting in the first few days
- avoid sex, tampons, swimming and baths for 2 days to reduce the risk of infection
- go back for a check-up 4 to 6 weeks after the IUD is put in
- check the IUD threads each month after your period to make sure the IUD is still in the right place

## Things to remember with your Copper IUD

- check the threads each month after your period to make sure the IUD is still in the right place
- if you have any unusual symptoms (discharge from your vagina, pain low in your tummy or deep pain during sex) see your doctor straight away
- if you are worried you could be pregnant, have a pregnancy test
- if you or your partner have a new sexual partner, use a condom every time until you both have been checked for STIs
- keep a record of the date to take out your IUD - it shouldn't stay in for longer than the recommended time



## Hampton Park Women's Health Clinic

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**A copper IUD is a small device with a fine copper wire wrapped around a plastic frame.**

**It's placed inside the uterus to prevent pregnancy.**

**A fine nylon thread is attached to the IUD. The thread comes out through the cervix into the top end of the vagina.**

**There are two types of copper IUDs available in Australia - one lasts for 5 years and the other for 10 years.**

### **How does the copper IUD work?**

The IUD is placed inside your uterus by a doctor or nurse.

The copper IUD:

- is toxic to the egg and sperm which stops sperm from fertilising the egg
- slows the transport of the egg to delay chance of sperm and egg meeting
- changes the lining of the uterus to make it unable to support a fertilised egg

### **How well does the Copper IUD work?**

The copper IUD is 99.5% effective.

### **Who can use the Copper IUD?**

- most women who want a reliable, long-term contraceptive
- women who haven't had a pregnancy, have completed their families, or are spacing their pregnancies
- women who are breastfeeding
- women who cannot, or do not want to, use hormonal contraception because of medical conditions or personal preference



### **When you should NOT use the Copper IUD**

- you think you might be pregnant
- you have had a recent infection called pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
- you have unusual bleeding from your vagina
- you have Wilson's disease or you are allergic to copper

### **When to talk to your Doctor before having the Copper IUD**

- if you have painful or heavy long lasting periods
- if you have anaemia (not enough iron in your blood)
- if you have had a recent sexually transmissible infection (STI)
- if you have fibroids or other conditions that change the shape of your uterus
- if you have had problems in the past with an IUD (for instance it has come out by itself)
- if you are unable to have a follow-up check-up after the IUD is put in

### **Advantages**

- It's very effective
- It can stay in place for 5 or 10 years depending on which one you choose
- The initial cost of a copper IUD is more than for other methods, but it lasts for 5 or 10 years so it works out to be a reasonable price
- It does not contain hormones so it has no hormonal side-effects
- Your fertility goes back to normal straight away when you take it out
- It can be used as emergency contraception if it is put in up to 5 days after unprotected sex