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Preparing for insertion and/or removal of a coil

Information for women

Sexual and Reproductive Health

How do I find out about coils?

You can discuss coils with a doctor or nurse at your GP practice or a Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) clinic. There are different types of coil with different advantages and disadvantages.

It's useful to talk through how they're fitted, the benefits and risks of the coil - and alternative options.

You can get further reliable information about coils from the following:

www.FPA.org.uk - leaflets available at SRH clinics

www.nhs.uk

www.theinsandouts.co.uk

Do I need any tests before making an appointment?

Untreated chlamydia infection at the time of coil fitting can cause pelvic infection. People can have chlamydia without any symptoms. The test is usually a cotton bud vaginal swab that you take yourself.

Anyone can ask for a test. We strongly advise getting a test before any coil procedure for women under 26 years of age or anyone who's had a change of sexual partner in the last year.

Women with some gynaecological symptoms may need a vaginal examination or ultrasound to make sure that the coil is a suitable option.

How do I make an appointment?

Please call the clinic on **0345 337 9900**.

Clinics are held in Aberdeen Community Health Village, Frederick Street, Aberdeen, Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin and some procedures can be done in the SRH clinics at Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

All Grampian SRH clinics are booked through the above number - please let the receptionist know where you would like to be seen.

Coil fitting, removal or change appointments are during office hours Monday to Friday.

We can insert, remove or change a coil at any time of your cycle, including during a period.

How do I prepare for my coil appointment?

We recommend that you take paracetamol or ibuprofen (as suits you best) about one hour before your appointment.

Make sure you've had breakfast or lunch before the appointment.

You can come to the appointment on your own or bring an adult friend or relative.

Please arrange for someone to look after babies or young children while you have your appointment.

Please bring a urine sample with you to save time in the clinic, as you might need a pregnancy test.

If you don't have a suitable container for your sample, ask for a bottle at the desk when you come in. Please try to arrive a little early for your appointment to allow yourself time for this.

How long does the appointment take?

Please allow an hour for the appointment.

The actual fitting, change and/or removal of a coil usually takes less than 10 minutes, but we'll talk things through before the procedure and some women want to rest for a short while afterwards.

We recommend that you don't drive for one hour after your appointment.

What should I do about contraception?

Before a coil insertion

Keep using your usual method of contraception carefully right up until the coil is inserted.

If you've had unprotected sex or just used the withdrawal method since the first day of your period, we may not be able to go ahead that day, even if you've had the emergency contraceptive pill.

We'll tell you how soon you can rely on your coil for contraception. This depends on the type of coil you choose and where you are in your cycle when it's fitted.

Before a coil change

Avoid sex completely or use condoms for 7 days before your coil is changed. There would be a risk of pregnancy from sex you had already had in the week before the appointment if we couldn't fit the new coil as planned.

If your coil is overdue a change we advise you to avoid intercourse or use an additional method (not just withdrawal or emergency pills) until your appointment.

We could not go ahead with the coil change if you've had sex without an additional method in the 3 weeks before the appointment.

Before having a coil removed

If you don't want to become pregnant, avoid sex completely or use condoms for 7 days before your appointment.

You would also have contraceptive cover if you have started your future method of contraception (such as pills, patch, injection, implant) at least 7 days before the coil is removed.

The coil can be removed at any time in your cycle without avoiding sex beforehand if you wish to become pregnant or no longer need contraception.

I need my coil changed / removed but the threads are missing- what happens at clinic?

If the coil threads can't be found, you would have an ultrasound scan to see if the coil is still in the uterus.

This is usually a transvaginal ultrasound - a small probe is inserted into the vagina. This allows us to get a clear view of the uterus and coil position.

If the coil is in the uterus, we can usually remove it in the clinic with special instruments. You may need local anaesthetic for this and would be able to discuss options with the doctor.

If the coil is not seen in the uterus on scan, we would arrange an X-ray to see if it is still in your body.

Getting here

Sexual and Reproductive Health appointments

If your appointment is at Sexual and Reproductive Health, Aberdeen Community Health Village, 50 Frederick Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5HY, there is public transport to the city centre. If you come by car, there is parking in the city centre near the clinic in the Frederick Street Car Park but change is required for parking machines. Allow an hour for the appointment.

Dr Gray's, Peterhead Health Centre and Fraserburgh Hospital appointments

There is free parking at Dr Gray's Hospital, Peterhead Health Centre and Fraserburgh Hospital.

Further information

If you need further information or wish to change your appointment, please call:

If you can't keep your appointment for any reason please let us know. We can then offer your appointment to someone else.

NHS Grampian Sexual Health Service

 **0345 337 9900** 

**This leaflet is also available in large print.
Other formats and languages can be
supplied on request. Please call Quality
Development on 01224 554149 for a copy.
Ask for leaflet 1169.**

Feedback from the public helped us to develop this leaflet.
If you have any comments on how we can improve it,
please call 01224 554149 to let us know.

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