

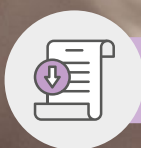
HerLife HerHealth



PRIMARY CARE
WOMEN'S HEALTH FORUM

Coil fitting Patient Information Leaflet

WORDS BY DR RAMIYA AL-ALOUSI



For more resources visit
www.pcwhf.co.uk/HLHH

The guidance has been compiled for the Primary Care Women's Health Forum (PCWHF) Her Life Her Health publication. It was correct at the time of going to print. The guidance is for use by healthcare professionals only. Users should independently verify the content or information before relying on it. This information is the opinion of the PCWHF or its contributors/authors and does not necessarily represent those of individual partners. For further information, please contact: hello@pcwhf.co.uk. ► For more resources visit: www.pcwhf.co.uk/HLHH

Coil fitting Patient Information Leaflet

A coil is a T-shaped device that offers more than 99% effective and reliable contraception. The coil is part of a group of contraceptives called long-acting reversible contraception (LARC). There are two types of coil – the Intrauterine Device (IUD) or the Intrauterine System (IUS). The effects are quickly reversible on removal of the device and there are no lasting effects on fertility.

IUD	IUS
Non-hormonal	Hormonal
Releases copper which is toxic to sperm and eggs	Thickens cervical mucus and thins lining of the womb
Lasts 5 or 10 years dependent on type used	Lasts 3, 5 or 6 years dependent on type used
Can be used as emergency contraception	Some products can be used as part of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)
Can cause prolonged or heavier periods	Periods usually become lighter but unpredictable and can rarely cause hormonal side effects
If inserted from 40 can be left and provides effective contraception until post-menopause	If inserted from 45 can be left and provides effective contraception until post-menopause

What are the risks?

Infection: There is a slightly increased risk of pelvic infection in the first few weeks after insertion.

Perforation: This rare complication affects less than 2 women in 1000 fittings, and is when the device goes through the womb. This risk is minimised by techniques used during fitting but is increased in women who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

Expulsion: The coil can sometimes be expelled, most commonly during a heavy period.

Ectopic pregnancy: The risk of pregnancy is extremely low but if the method fails then there is a higher risk that the pregnancy will be ectopic (in the Fallopian tube).

Vasovagal: Occasionally your blood pressure and heart rate can drop during/after coil fitting. This usually resolves quickly but sometimes needs an injection of medication to help.

What can I expect at the coil fitting appointment?



INITIAL

- To assess if a coil is the best choice for you.
- Discuss the different devices.
- You can ask any questions.

If you are worried do not hesitate to discuss your concerns and we will try our best to reassure you.



FITTING

- Fitted by a trained doctor or nurse, there may also be an assistant present.
- Fitting takes 5-10 minutes, using a speculum in a similar way to how cervical smears are taken.
- If due a smear then this can usually be done at the same time.
- Swabs may be taken to check for infection.
- You may feel some period cramp-type discomfort.
- Easy access to local anaesthetic if needed.

Remember that we can stop at any time if you want us to.

Coil fitting Patient Information Leaflet

How can I prepare for my coil fitting?

TIMING

- Can be fitted at any time as long as there is no risk of pregnancy.
- Best fitted towards the end of your period as we can then be sure that you are not pregnant, and your cervix is more relaxed.
- Can also be fitted from 4 weeks after giving birth, and does not affect breastfeeding.

NEW FITTING

- **Avoid unprotected intercourse** or abstain after your last period to ensure that there is no risk of pregnancy (unless you are using a reliable method of contraception such as the pill, implant, injection).
- If you have unprotected intercourse in the **3 weeks** before your appointment then the coil fitting will be delayed until pregnancy can be reliably excluded.
- A non-hormonal IUD can be used as emergency contraception if specific criteria are met.

REMOVAL AND REFIT

- **Avoid unprotected intercourse** or abstain within the **7 days** before your appointment.
- Occasionally a new coil cannot be refitted on the same day due to cervical tightening on removing the existing coil.
- A further appointment date will then be given to attempt fitting again.

SWITCHING CONTRACEPTION

- If already using the combined pill, patch or ring or the progestogen only pill, implant or injection, then continue using these until the appointment date.
- You may be advised to continue these for a short time afterwards too.
- A coil can be fitted at any time if these methods are used consistently beforehand.

SUITABILITY

Speak to your healthcare professional in advance if you have any of the following conditions:

- any irregular vaginal bleeding
- symptoms of an untreated STI or pelvic infection
- womb/cervical problems or previous endometrial ablation
- known heart rhythm problems

TOP TIPS

1.

Make sure to eat and drink before your fitting appointment

2.

Have simple painkillers like paracetamol and ibuprofen (if tolerated) an hour before the appointment

3.

Allow plenty of time for the appointment and avoid strenuous activity after fitting

Coil fitting Patient Information Leaflet



WHEN IS THE COIL EFFECTIVE?

Non-hormonal IUD:

- Immediately

Hormonal IUS:

- Fitted up to day 7 of a natural cycle – Immediately
- Fitted after day 7 of a natural cycle – 7 days of extra precautions needed



IF BLEEDING BECOMES TROUBLESOME, SPEAK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL AS THERE ARE MEDICATIONS THAT CAN HELP.

What should I expect after my coil fitting?

COMMON SYMPTOMS

- Bring a sanitary pad as some vaginal bleeding is common afterwards and for the following few days.
- Mild cramp-like abdominal pain is common for a few days after fitting. Taking some simple pain relief will help.
- **IUS:** Irregular bleeding for the first 3-6 months can occur but usually settles with time.
- **IUD:** Periods may be heavier and longer.

If bleeding becomes troublesome, speak to your healthcare professional as there are medications that can help. If abdominal pain worsens; you develop offensive vaginal discharge or fever, or have any concerns – seek medical attention.

CHECKING THREADS

- Check your coil threads after 4-6 weeks from fitting and regularly thereafter.
- If you cannot feel the threads or you can feel a hard plastic stem then use alternative contraception and contact your health care team for further advice.