

How does the IUD prevent implantation?

There are several possible explanations including:

- uterine contraction
- chronic inflammation
- production of antibodies which may destroy the new life when it enters the uterus.

Other Uses

Mirena® may be used in women who are having uncontrollably heavy periods in the months and years leading up to menopause because the progesterone decreases menstrual flow. So, it can have a treatment role and is morally acceptable in women who are not sexually active.

How do I get my IUD removed?

Women should never try to remove IUDs themselves or ask non-professionals to do it for them. Serious damage could result.

In some cases, IUDs cannot be easily pulled free. In these cases, the cervix may have to be dilated and a surgical tool may be used to free the IUD. In very rare cases, surgery becomes necessary.



The Help Women Deserve

Women have a right to be educated with the facts. Only when a woman has been fully informed will she be able to give full consent.

Natural Family Planning (NFP)

If you need to use a safe and natural way of planning your family (provided you have a just reason for doing so), then you might want to investigate a method of Natural Family Planning such as the Billings Ovulation Method, or the Creighton Method (also known as NaPro Technology). These methods help couples to understand their fertility by teaching them to recognise when ovulation is occurring. They can be used responsibly to either achieve or avoid a pregnancy.

References:

1. CW Kischer. *When Does Human Life Begin? The Final Answer*. Linacre Quarterly 2004;70(4):326-339
2. England, Marjorie A. *Life Before Birth*. 2nd ed. 1996; England, Mosby-Wolfe.
3. John F. Neas. Chapter 28: *Human Development Embryology Atlas*.



Family Life International (Australia)

Web: www.fli.org.au / Email: mail@fli.org.au

PO Box 205 Broadway NSW 2007

Ph: (02) 9519 9111 / Fax: (02) 9519 9622

What you should know about

the IUD



What is the IUD?

The IUD (Intrauterine Device) often referred to as the “Loop” is a small, flexible device made of plastic that is inserted into the uterus for birth control purposes. An IUD is shaped like the letter T. A nylon string tied to the end of the IUD hangs down through the cervix into the vagina. The woman checks the IUD is still in the womb by feeling the string. The string is also used by the doctor to remove the IUD.

When does human life begin?

Human life begins at the moment of conception.¹ That is to say, the moment at which the egg and sperm meet. From this moment, all the genetic material the child will ever require in its life will already be present. All 46 chromosomes are present at this moment - 23 from mum and 23 from dad. The child’s genetic make-up is established at conception, including:

- gender
- eye colour
- bone structure
- hair colour
- skin colour
- susceptibility to certain diseases²

All that is needed is time for the child to grow.

Risks

- IUDs need to be inserted by a doctor who must open the cervix to do so. This is often painful.
- Heavy, long and/or painful periods.
- Spotting between periods.
- Pelvic inflammatory disease which can lead to adhesions, scarred fallopian tubes and infertility.
- Risk of septicaemia (infection that has entered the bloodstream).
- Perforation of the uterus.
- Spontaneous abortion in pregnancies subsequent to IUD removal.

Once the egg has been fertilised (which can occur within three hours of intercourse)³, the embryo must travel to the womb and implant there. It is here that the child will develop and grow until he or she is ready to be born.

How does the IUD work?

The IUD prevents the newly conceived human baby from implanting in the uterine lining (endometrium) of the womb.

Does the IUD cause an abortion?

Yes. The active chemical – either progesterone or copper (depending on the type of IUD) slowly diffuses into the uterus, altering the lining of the uterus (endometrium). The endometrium has all the nutrition for the new human to grow but the active chemical from the IUD makes the uterus hostile to the developing human embryo so it cannot implant in the mother’s womb. That is, it kills the unborn human being.

An IUD is sometimes used as a form of early abortion. If inserted within 5 days of sexual intercourse, it will almost always bring about the death of the developing embryo.

Do not use an IUD if you have any of the following:

- A history of pelvic infection
- A history of Toxic Shock Syndrome
- A history of sexually transmitted diseases
- Multiple sexual partners
- Severe menstrual cramps
- Abnormal bleeding
- Abnormal cervix or uterus
- Current abnormal pap smear
- Previous ectopic pregnancy
- Heart valve disease
- Allergy to copper

Types of IUDs

There are two basic types of IUD available:

1. Hormonal, for example; Mirena[®]
2. Copper, for example; ParaGard[®]

Mirena[®]

The hormonal LNG-IUD, marketed under the brand names Mirena[®] and, in some European countries, Levonova[®] is made of flexible plastic. It releases a low amount of progestin levonorgestrel continuously over a 5-year period as a way to stop implantation of the developing embryo. Periods usually become lighter after 3 months.

ParaGard[®]

The ParaGard[®] intrauterine device (also called the TCu-380A) is made of flexible plastic and wrapped in copper. With ParaGard[®], your periods won’t get shorter or lighter; rather, they may get heavier and longer. The ParaGard[®] IUD releases a tiny amount of copper over a 10-year period and the Multiload-375 (also copper-bearing) can remain inserted for up to 5 years as a way to stop implantation of the developing embryo.



LNG-IUD



TCu-380A



Multiload-375

