



THE WOMEN'S HEALTH EXPERTS

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# Progestin IUD Fact Sheet:

## MIRENA®, LILETTA®, SKYLA®, AND OTHERS

**How does the progestin IUD work?** The progestin IUD is a T-shaped plastic rod that stays in your uterus. It contains a hormone (progestin) like the one your body makes. The hormone blocks sperm from reaching the egg and stops the release of eggs. If sperm cannot reach an egg, you cannot get pregnant. No method of birth control is 100% effective. The progestin IUD is over 99% effective.

### AFTER THE PROGESTIN IUD IS INSERTED, WHEN CAN I HAVE SEX?

You must wait 24 hours after the IUD is placed before you can use tampons or have sex.

### WHEN DOES THE PROGESTIN IUD START WORKING?

The progestin IUD starts to work 7 days after it is inserted. For 7 days after your IUD is inserted **use condoms or continue your pills/patch/ring as backup.**

### HOW LONG DOES THE PROGESTIN IUD LAST?

The progestin IUD works for 3 to 7 years, depending on the type of IUD you choose.

### IS THERE ANYTHING I NEED TO DO AFTER HAVING THE IUD INSERTED?

Some people like to check their IUD's string after each period. To check, insert a finger into your vagina and feel for the cervix (it feels like the tip of your nose). You should feel the string near your cervix. **Do not** pull on the string.

### WHAT DO I DO IF AND WHEN I DECIDE TO GET PREGNANT?

When you are ready, your health care provider will remove your IUD. Most people get pregnant soon after removal.

### HOW DOES THE PROGESTIN IUD HELP ME?

- You do not need to think about birth control before or during sex
- You do not need refills (as you do for the pill)
- You can use the progestin IUD while breastfeeding
- You may have less cramping and bleeding with periods
- The progestin IUD costs less than most types of birth control.

### HOW WILL I FEEL HAVING THE PROGESTIN IUD IN ME? HOW WILL MY BODY CHANGE?

You will not feel the IUD in you. You may have cramps and spotty periods for the first few months. Ibuprofen can help. You can take up to 4 pills (800 mg) of Ibuprofen every 8 hours with food. To prevent cramps, take Ibuprofen when your period starts and keep taking it every 8 hours for the first 2-3 days of your period. You can also put a hot water bottle on your belly if you have bad cramps. You may stop having periods after 1-2 years with the progestin IUD. This is normal. You may have spotting, bloating, nausea, headaches, or breast tenderness.

### DOES THE PROGESTIN IUD HAVE RISKS?

The progestin IUD is very safe. Serious problems are rare. If you have the following symptoms within the first 3 weeks after getting an IUD, see your health care provider:

- Fever higher than 101°F
- Chills
- Strong or sharp pain in your belly

**If you have the following symptoms at any time while you have an IUD in you, see your health care provider:**

- Feeling pregnant (breast tenderness, nausea, vomiting)
- Positive home pregnancy test

Remember, the progestin IUD does not protect you from Sexually Transmitted Infections or HIV. Always use condoms to protect yourself!

