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### What is IUD?

The IUD is a small contraceptive device that is placed inside the uterus. There are two kinds of IUD.

- The [hormonal IUD](#) is a small T-shape device with a cylinder containing progestogen around its stem.
- The [copper IUD](#) is a non-hormonal small plastic device with copper wrapped around the frame/stem.

### How does it work?

- The [hormonal IUD](#) stops a pregnancy by thickening the mucus at the cervix (neck of the uterus/womb) so that sperm cannot get through to meet an egg. It also makes it difficult for the egg to stick to the lining of the uterus to start a pregnancy. It may also stop the ovaries from releasing an egg in some users.
- The [copper IUD](#) stops sperm from meeting and fertilising an egg. It also makes it difficult for the egg to stick to the lining of the uterus to start a pregnancy. It can also be used as an emergency method of contraception within 5 days of unprotected sex, or 5 days after expected ovulation (release of an egg from the ovary).

### How well does it work?

- The hormonal IUD is 99.8% effective
- The copper IUD is more than 99% effective

## Advantages

Both the copper IUD and the hormonal IUD have the following benefits:

- Effective long term contraception (at least five years)
- Easy to maintain, you can't forget to use it as you might the Pill
- It is cheaper than other contraception (more expensive at first but cheaper over the long term)
- If you want to, you can try for pregnancy as soon as it is removed

The hormonal IUD has the added benefit of reducing menstrual bleeding. This is a benefit for women who would normally have heavy or long lasting periods, or who have heavier or longer lasting periods with the copper IUD.

## Will my partner or I feel the device during sex?

Neither you nor your partner should feel the IUD during sex. If you experience any pain or discomfort, you should have the position of the IUD checked by your doctor.

## What if I want to stop using the IUD? Is it reversible?

Both the hormonal and copper IUDs can be easily removed by a doctor and there is no delay in being able to get pregnant. It is important that you start using another form of contraception immediately if you don't want to become pregnant.

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