

#### What is the hormonal IUD?

The hormonal IUD is one of two types of intrauterine devices available in the United States. It is a small, flexible device made of soft plastic. The hormonal IUD contains a hormone called progestin. It is easily and quickly inserted into your uterus by a health care provider to prevent pregnancy.

#### How effective is the hormonal IUD?

The hormonal IUD is extremely effective and lasts up to 7 years. Less than 1 out of 100 women who have an IUD will get pregnant each year. The hormonal IUD is as effective as permanent sterilization, but your ability to become pregnant quickly returns once the IUD is removed.

#### How does it work?

The hormonal IUD blocks sperm from joining with an egg to prevent pregnancy in several ways:

- The hormone in the IUD keeps your ovaries from releasing eggs.
- Thick cervical mucus forms and blocks the opening to your uterus.
- The IUD also affects the ability of the sperm to move towards the egg.

Once inserted, it takes about seven days for the hormonal IUD to start working. Be sure to use backup birth control (like a condom) for the first seven days.

#### What are the benefits of using the hormonal IUD?

- The hormonal IUD is safe, convenient, and very effective.
- You won't have to think about birth control every day or every time you have sex.
- The hormonal IUD makes your periods lighter. Some women stop getting periods while using it.
- Because one IUD can be used for so long, it is actually one of the least expensive methods of birth control.
- If you decide you want to get pregnant, you can have the IUD easily removed at any time. Most women find their fertility returns to normal within a few weeks of having the IUD removed.

#### What are the downsides of using the hormonal IUD?

- The hormonal IUD does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- A health care provider has to insert and remove the IUD.
- The IUD can slip out of place. This is rare and is more likely to happen in women who have not had a baby.
- The hormonal IUD can increase cramps with your period. This is most common for the first three to six months. It can also cause irregular periods.

## **Where can I get the hormonal IUD?**

A trained health care provider can insert the IUD in a medical office or clinic.

## **Where can I get more information?**

For more information on the hormonal IUD, talk to your health care provider.

Compare the hormonal IUD to other birth control options using ARHP's Method Match at [www.arhp.org/MethodMatch](http://www.arhp.org/MethodMatch).