



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
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Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Intrauterine Device (IUD) Removal

An intrauterine device (in tra U ter in de vice), or IUD, is a small, T-shaped device. It is placed in your uterus by your health care provider to prevent pregnancy, to reduce heavy menstrual bleeding, or to help reduce painful menstrual cramps or pelvic pain.

Your IUD must be removed after you have had it in place for from 3 to 10 years. The timing depends on the type of IUD you have.

Before the procedure

If your IUD was placed to prevent pregnancy, and you are planning to continue using an IUD, the old IUD will be removed and the new IUD will be inserted at the same visit.

You should not have sex for at least one week before your IUD removal. This will reduce the chances of your becoming pregnant when the IUD is removed.

Preparation at home

- Before you come to the office to have your IUD removed, consider taking an over-the-counter pain medication such as Tylenol® or Motrin®.
- Take a shower or bath as you usually do before you come for your removal.

Removing the IUD

An IUD can be removed at any time during your menstrual cycle. The removal can usually be done during an office visit.

As during a gynecological exam or an IUD insertion, you will lie on your back with your feet on foot rests. A sheet will be draped over your body.

When it is time to remove the IUD, your provider will use a device called a speculum (SPECK u lum) that holds the vagina open so she or he can see the IUD strings. Your provider will use forceps to gently grasp the IUD strings and slowly pull on them. The IUD arms will fold up as it slides through the opening of the cervix.

Removal of your IUD is typically faster and less painful than the insertion. You should never try to remove the IUD by yourself.

After the removal you will be given education and instructions, then you will go home.

What to do and look for at home

- You may have some cramping or a small amount of vaginal bleeding that may last several hours to several days after the IUD removal. You may use a sanitary pad or a tampon if you need to until the bleeding stops.
- It can take up to 3 months after the IUD removal for your normal menstrual cycle (period) to return.
- **After removal of your IUD, you no longer have birth control. It is important to talk to your health care provider about another method of birth control if you do not wish to become pregnant.**

When to call your provider

Call your provider if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Severe cramping that is not relieved by over-the-counter pain medicine such as Tylenol or Motrin
- Heavier than usual bleeding
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- Fever over 101 degrees F
- Painful intercourse

Activity and diet

You may do your daily activities and eat the foods you normally do after the removal.

Follow-up appointments

Continue your routine gynecological exams, or call your doctor's office to schedule follow-up as you need to.