

# Low Maintenance Contraception – IUD and Implant FAQs for Patients

## What is low maintenance contraception?

Low maintenance contraception methods provide the strongest protection available against pregnancy and can last for years at a time. They are completely reversible, which means when you stop using them so you can get pregnant.

## What are different types?

Methods include the IUDs and contraceptive implant.

**Implant:** This type of birth control is a small rod placed into your upper arm by your health care professional (don't worry - you will barely even know it's there). The implant contains a small amount of progestin which keeps the egg from being released from the ovaries and prevents sperm from reaching the egg. It is more than 99 percent effective and lasts up to three years. The effects are completely reversible once it is removed.



**IUD:** An IUD is a small T shaped device placed into the uterus by a health care professional. IUDs are more than 99 percent effective!

The best part of using an IUD, besides not having to worry about birth control for years at a time, is that they are completely reversible. When you decide it

is time to become a mother, simply have the IUD removed by your healthcare professional. There IUDs with hormones and without hormones. Some last for 3, 5 or even 10 years depending on the type. Ask your health care provider about which IUD might be right for you.

## How do I know what one is best for me?

Finding the right birth control is important, as everyone is different. At BC4Teens we understand that and want to work with you to find the perfect fit for your life style. Come see us and we will work with you to find the best birth control method for you.

## Does it hurt? How long will it take to get one?

Insertion of the implant is quite easy. You will receive numbing medicine on your arm. After that starts working, your provider will make a small insertion and insert the device. A bandage should cover the site for two days and you might experience some mild discomfort or slight bruising.

IUDs are inserted into your uterus by a health care provider after a pelvic exam. You may feel cramping while it is put in. Your health care provider will advise you what to do if you have pain after insertion.



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### **What are the chances of my IUD falling out?**

Between 2-10 percent of IUDs will fall out within the first year. It can also be more common in girls who have never had a baby. The symptoms of an IUD expulsion include unusual vaginal discharge, cramping or pain, heavy menstrual bleeding, or if your strings feel longer than usual or you can feel hard plastic when you check your strings. Expulsion means that the IUD has moved out of position in the uterus and is coming out through the cervix. It is not a medical emergency and you can call the office to let us know that you think that your IUD is coming out and we will schedule an appointment to have your IUD checked.

### **Will an IUD or implant make me gain weight?**

None of the LARC methods have been demonstrated to cause weight gain. We recommend you eat right and exercise to maintain a healthy body.

### **I'm considering an IUD or implant but want to get pregnant in the next few years. Can I still get one?**

There are methods that last 3, 5 and 10 years.

You can always remove one before the expiration date; however, it's best to talk to your health care provider before starting a birth control method to make sure you find the one that fits best with your lifestyle.

### **Does the implant or IUDs protect me against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?**

No, negative, never. Neither the IUDs nor the implant will protect against STIs. You should always wear a condom during all anal, vaginal and oral sex. During sex, the BEST way to completely protect yourself and your partner from pregnancy and STIs is to use dual protection, both a condom and a birth control method like an IUD or implant.

### **I'm not sexually active. Should I still consider low maintenance contraception?**

LARCs are available for those who are not yet sexually active. Talk to your health care provider about which method is right for you.

**To learn more about birth control options, visit  
[NationwideChildrens.org/BC4Teens](http://NationwideChildrens.org/BC4Teens).**



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