

What is an IUD?

An IUD (intrauterine device) is a form of contraception that is inserted into the uterus.

There are two types of IUDs:

- the hormonal IUD (Mirena or Kyleena) - a small plastic T-shaped device that contains progestogen - these IUDs are licenced for 5 (Kyleena) to 8 (Mirena) years for contraception.
- the copper IUD - a small plastic device with copper wire wrapped around it - this IUD does not contain hormones, and can be used for 5-10 years for contraception

An IUD can usually be removed easily by a doctor or nurse. Both types of IUDs are removed the same way.

For more information about IUDs please see our other factsheets.

When does my IUD need to be removed?

IUDs usually need to be replaced every 5 to 10 years, depending on the type of IUD you have and the age you were when it was put in. Ask your doctor for advice about when your IUD needs to be replaced. You can also choose to have your IUD removed at any time if you want to become pregnant or if you don't want it anymore.

When it is time to have your IUD removed, you have 2 options.

OPTION 1: If you want to become pregnant

- You can have your IUD removed at any time and your normal fertility returns straight away
- It is a good idea to talk to a health care professional about things you should do before you get pregnant like starting folic acid and checking your immunisations are up to date
 - This is best done at least one month before you get your IUD removed.

OPTION 2: If you do not want to become pregnant

- It is possible to have a new IUD put in immediately after the other one is taken out - ask your doctor for advice
- If you are not having a new IUD put in immediately, and do not want to fall pregnant, it is best to have your IUD removed when:
 - it is the first few days (days 1 to 3) of your period (if you have a copper IUD),
 - you have not had sex in the 7 days before you want to remove the IUD; or
 - you have used another method of contraception for the 7 days before



Where can I go to get my IUD removed?

You can go to a Family Planning Australia clinic, some general practices and some women's health centres to have an IUD removed. The IUD is taken out by a doctor or nurse who has been trained in this procedure.

How is my IUD removed?

The IUDs available in Australia have a thread so that they can be easily removed. The doctor or nurse will look inside your vagina using a speculum. The doctor or nurse will use an instrument to gently pull on the thread to remove the IUD. It only takes a couple of minutes. Some people may experience discomfort or cramping during the removal, but this is typically brief. Others don't feel much pain at all.



IUD REMOVAL

There are many different types of IUDs available in other countries. It is important to tell your doctor or nurse if your IUD was inserted in another country. Depending on the type of IUD you have, they may need to refer you to a gynaecologist to have it removed.

For more information

- Visit your nearest Family Planning Australia clinic fpnsw.org.au/clinics
- Chat to a nurse via Talkline – 1300 658 886 or fpnsw.org.au/talkline
- National Relay Service (for people who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing or have speech communication difficulties) – 133 677
- Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) – 131 450
- Family Planning NSW client resource on contraception – What suits me? fpnsw.org.au/health-information/contraception/contraception-options
- Family Planning Australia factsheet – Pre-pregnancy planning
- Family Planning Australia factsheet – Hormonal IUD
- Family Planning Australia factsheet – Copper IUD