



WHAT IS MIRENA?

- A Mirena is a type of intrauterine contraceptive device (IUD) that is fitted inside the uterus, where it releases a hormone called progesterone
- It can be used:
 - to treat abnormal menstrual bleeding and reduce pain during the menstrual cycle
 - to protect the uterine lining during hormone therapy
 - for contraception
 - to help management of polycystic ovarian syndrome

HOW DOES IT WORK?

It is a thin plastic T shaped device with two fine nylon strings attached. The long arm of the IUD is coated with a fine membrane containing the hormone progesterone. Once inserted the IUD sits in the uterus and the two strings feed through the cervix sitting up against the wall of the upper vagina. It then steadily releases small amounts of the hormone in to the uterus which:

- changes the lining of the uterus not allowing a pregnancy to grow
- thickens the cervical mucus, so that sperm cannot enter the uterus
- affects the ability of the sperm and eggs to move through the uterus and fallopian tubes reducing the chance of the eggs being fertilised

The Mirena needs to be replaced at least every 5 years.

HOW IS A MIRENA INSERTED?

An initial appointment is needed by one of our specially trained doctors to assess whether this IUD is suitable for you. If suitable, the doctor will provide a prescription and a follow up

appointment should be made for 25 minutes. It can be used after pregnancy and whilst breast feeding as long a pregnancy has been excluded.

The best time for insertion of the IUD is within 7 days of the first day of your period. The procedure can be performed without anaesthesia, but taking pain relief prior to the appointment is recommended. The device is inserted in a similar way to a cervical screening test, a speculum will be placed in your vagina and your cervix cleaned with an antiseptic. This is to reduce the chance of pelvic infection (PID) that can occur in 1 in every 500 insertions. The length of the uterus is measured and the IUD is placed inside through the cervix or the opening to the uterus. The string is cut so that it is well up into the vagina. You or your sexual partner won't notice it but you should be able to feel the string if you reach right up into your vagina.

The device is removed in a similar way to the insertion.

WHY WOULD I CONSIDER A MIRENA?

- Effective and convenient – is at least 99% effective in preventing pregnancy for up to 5 years.
- Usually reduces pain and heavy periods with up to 90% of recipients finding significant improvement of their symptoms.
- Easily removed, making it a quickly reversible contraceptive solution, with immediate return to fertility.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- May be more difficult to insert if you had not had children or only caesarean deliveries.
- Does not give protection against sexually transmitted diseases (STIs).
- It does not suit women with an unusually shaped uterus as it could be expelled.
- After insertion there may be irregular bleeding and spotting in the first few months, but bleeding usually settles and periods become shorter and lighter.
- Some women experience hormonal side effects such as bloating or skin changes. This is uncommon as the hormone dose is so small.

We are a team of committed and experienced family doctors, nurses and support staff working together to set new standards in patient care and practice administration.

For information about all our services and our doctors, please visit

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