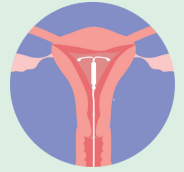


## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

## WHAT IS THE LEVONORGESTREL IUD?

An IUD is a small device inserted into the uterine cavity

The IUD can be copper or contain a type of progesterone called **levonorgestrel (LNG)**. The copper IUD is only used for contraception while the LNG IUD is used for many other purposes as well!



### Q: What is levonorgestrel?

Levonorgestrel is a type of progesterone, which is a hormone made in the body. Progesterone **thins out the uterine lining** that is shed during your period.

With the LNG IUD, there is very little systemic (whole body) absorption of the hormone. This means that **hormonal side effects are much less common than** with other hormonal medications.

Examples of hormonal side effects:  
Acne, breast tenderness, headaches, mood changes

### Q: What can the LNG IUD be used for?

#### 1 Contraception

Works by temporarily thinning out the uterine lining and thickening cervical mucus. Fertility returns ~1 month after IUD is removed.

lasts  
5-7  
years

**One of the most effective methods!**  
0.2 pregnancies per 100 years

#### 2 Heavy Menstrual Bleeding

The progesterone thins out the uterine lining and keeps it that way, so there is less lining to shed each month.

#### 3 Menstrual Cramping

By reducing the amount of blood lost each month, there is less inflammation, which results in less pain.



#### 4 Endometriosis & Chronic Pelvic Pain

Not only does the progesterone thin out the lining, it also is thought to thin and inactivate surrounding endometriosis implants, triggering less pain.

#### 5 Endometrial Hyperplasia

By thinning out the uterine lining, the IUD is used to prevent endometrial cancer in people at risk. In a very small number of well-counselled patients, it can be used to treat people with precancer or cancer in the uterus.

#### 6 Component of Menopausal Hormone Therapy

If someone is on menopausal hormone therapy, estrogen can cause the uterine lining to thicken. Progesterone keeps the lining thin and therefore prevents endometrial cancer.

### Q: What are the side effects of an LNG IUD?



Spotting is common in the first few weeks to months, but usually gets better with time. Your doctor can recommend medication to take to help.



Many people (up to 80%!) will stop having periods altogether after having the IUD in for some time.



Cramping during insertion and for few days after – NSAIDs or anti-inflammatory medications (e.g., ibuprofen) can help with this!



Hormonal side effects, such as acne, breast tenderness, headaches, mood changes (uncommon).

### Q: Is it safe not to have a period? Does that blood go elsewhere in the body?

Typically, people get periods regularly. This allows them to shed their lining to prevent it from getting too thick, which can lead to other concerns. BUT, with the LNG IUD, you don't have to worry about it, because the lining becomes very thin so there is no lining to shed.



Scan for  
additional  
resources

