

Consider LARC

Interested in birth control? Want something **very effective** (over 99% effective)? **Long-term** (lasting 3-10 years)? Easily **reversible** (fertility returns quickly after it is removed)? Then you should think about long acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods. These include contraceptive implants and intrauterine devices.

CONTRACEPTIVE IMPLANT

Nexplanon is a hormone-releasing birth control implant. It is soft and flexible and inserted in a discreet location in the inner, upper arm. It is small in size (4 cm in length, 2 mm in diameter) so no one has to know that it's there but you and your health care provider. Nexplanon does not require attention daily, weekly, monthly, or even quarterly. It is considered a long-term method because it prevents pregnancy for up to **3 years**. Read more: www.nexplanon-usa.com. CPT codes: Nexplanon (J7307), insertion (11981)

INTRAUTERINE DEVICES

There are 3 intrauterine devices (IUDs) currently available in the US. They are all T-shaped, made of soft, flexible plastic and are placed in your uterus by your healthcare provider during a routine office visit. It takes less than a minute to insert. They are all easy to use, reliable and completely reversible.

Paragard is a non-hormonal IUD and measures 32 mm horizontally x 36 mm vertically. It is wrapped in copper, which acts as an irritant to prevent conception. However, your period may be heavier than usual due to this irritant effect. This method is popular for women who want effective birth control without any hormones. It lasts for up to **10 years**. Read more: www.paragard.com. CPT codes Paragard (J7300), IUD insertion (58301)

Mirena is a hormone-releasing IUD measuring 32 x 32 mm. It releases small amounts of progestin into the uterus. The progestin thickens cervical mucus to prevent sperm from entering the uterus and also keeps the lining of the uterus very thin. Many women using Mirena do not get a period at all, or have very light periods. The FDA has also approved it as a treatment for heavy bleeding. Mirena lasts for up to **5 years**. Read more: www.mirena-us.com. CPT codes: Mirena (J7298), IUD insertion (58301)

Kyleena is a hormone-releasing IUD. It measures 28 mm horizontally x 30 mm vertically. Similar to but slightly smaller than Mirena, it was developed especially for young women who haven't had children yet. Most women have a very light period. It prevents pregnancy for up to **5 years**. Read more: www.kyleena-us.com. CPT codes Kyleena (J7296), IUD insertion (58301)

Myths and misperceptions about IUDs

Myth: *IUDs cause infertility*. There is NO evidence that IUD use is associated with future infertility. Exposure to chlamydia, not prior IUD use, IS associated with infertility.

Myth: *IUDs cause pelvic inflammatory disease*. PID is not caused by IUDs. However, if you have a chlamydial or gonorrheal infection at the time of insertion, the infection can be carried into your uterus. STIs will be screened for before or at the time of insertion.

Myth: *IUDs are only for women who have had children*. IUDs have been used safely around the globe for women of all reproductive ages for decades. There was a particularly bad IUD in the 70's called the Dalkon Shield. It had a multi-filamentous string allowing bacteria to cling to it causing many complications. It was removed from the market and IUD use was limited to women who had at least one child. All current IUDs have a single filament string. They have been extensively tested for **safety** and effectiveness. Large studies have definitively proven that modern IUDs do *not* cause PID.

Myth: *You or your partner will feel the IUD*. Since IUDs are placed inside the uterus you will not be able to feel it. There is a string at the end of the IUD and it will extend out of the cervix (used for monitoring its position and for easy removal when it is time to take it out). But you will not see it or feel it outside the vagina as the cervix is far back in the vagina. The string feels more like a fishing wire. It will be cut about 4 cm long so it will wrap around behind the cervix. If it is too short than it might "poke" your partner. You will be able to feel it (your doctor will instruct you!) but most likely your partner will not.

Affordable Care Act. Under this legislation, your insurance company is required to offer some forms of birth control at no cost. Currently, many oral contraceptive pills are available for no co-pay (mostly generics) as well as LARCs at no additional cost as well. Check with your insurance company directly regarding no cost contraception. This includes a list of pills and the devices with the above CPT codes.