

Specialists In Reproductive Medicine & Surgery, P.A.

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Excellence, Experience & Ethics



Mirena Intra-Uterine Device (IUD) Patient Information

Definition:

Mirena (Levonorgestrel-Releasing Intrauterine System) is an intrauterine device that prevents pregnancy in part by releasing progestin over a 5 year period.

Anatomy/Physiology:

Mirena contains a progestin which is closely related to the natural hormone progesterone. Mirena works by inhibiting the health and movement of sperm, changing the transport speed of the egg, thinning the lining of the uterus, thickening the cervical mucus and inhibiting the release of the egg.

Indications:

Mirena may be used as a contraceptive or simply as a method to stop menstruation. Mirena may also be indicated for women with anemia, heavy periods, painful periods, PMS, ovulatory pain and endometriosis. Mirena should only be used by women who only have one sexual partner. Mirena may be indicated for patients who are unable to take oral contraceptives. For example, women who smoke over the age of 35 or who have experienced elevated blood pressure, headaches or leg pain while on oral contraceptives may be candidates for Mirena. In general, women who cannot take estrogen and are in mutually monogamous relationships are often good candidates for Mirena.

Advantages:

- Excellent form of contraception with a 99% prevention rate over one year
- Reduction of endometriosis and chronic pelvic pain
- Reduces the menstrual flow of women with fibroids
- Prevent the formation of endometrial polyps
- Reduction in menstrual flow with patients with adenomyosis.
- Reduced menstrual flow resulting in less anemia with approximately 50% of the patients no longer menstruating within one year of use
- Reduction in pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
- Rapid return to conception upon removal
- Decreases the likelihood of seizures occurring in woman with underlying seizure disorder
- Excellent alternative for the sickle cell disease patient
- Reduced chance of ectopic pregnancy if pregnancy does occur with the Mirena in place
- Woman who are breast feeding may use Mirena

Absolute Contraindications:

- Uterine bleeding of unknown cause
- Pregnancy
- Active liver disease
- Active blood clot
- Current, recent, or recurrent Pelvic Inflammatory Disease

Administration:

Mirena is inserted into the uterus through the cervix during the first 10 days of the menstrual cycle. Menstrual-like cramps are common during and shortly after the insertion process. We suggest that you take about 800 mg. of Ibuprofen or similar medication about one hour prior to the procedure.

Complications:

- When used as a form of contraception, the failure rate (i.e., pregnancy rate) is estimated at less than 1%. An additional form of contraception should be used for the first two weeks following insertion.
- Irregular uterine bleeding during the first 3-6 months after placement is normal. The bleeding usually takes the form of unpredictable spotting. If persistent or heavy bleeding occurs, your physician may recommend further evaluation and treatment.
- Expulsions occur in less than 5% of women and most occur within the first 3 weeks.
- If pregnancy occurs while the Mirena is in place, the IUD will need to be removed. If the Mirena is left in place, 50% will spontaneously lose the pregnancy while (sometimes quite late with concomitant infection) 20% will lose the pregnancy if the IUD is removed.
- A pelvic infection occurs in 5-7.5% of women and usually occurs within the first 20 days after insertion. Your clinician will try to minimize this risk by culturing your cervix for infections prior to placement of the IUD.

Infrequent Complications:

- Ovarian cysts – 9% over placebo (most are without symptoms and disappear in 2-3 months)
- Depression – 7% increase over placebo
- Decreasing HDL blood levels (decreasing HDL levels are associated with a greater risk for heart disease) -- <5% decrease in HDL level over placebo
- Headaches – 4% increase over placebo
- Dizziness – 1% increase over placebo
- Skin changes and acne – 0.5% over placebo
- Allergic reactions – very rare
- Changes in sexual drive (increase or decrease)
- Changes in weight (increase or decrease)

Summary:

Mirena is an excellent contraceptive. It also is an excellent alternative for the control of woman's menstrual cycle with a minimal probability for adverse reactions.

Updated: 7/10/2010

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