

## Copper IUD Aftercare Instructions

- Do not put anything in the vagina/internal genitals for **24 hours** after IUD insertion (NO tampons, menstrual cups, baths, swimming, hot tub or sex) to limit risk of infection. Showering is safe.
- **The copper IUD is effective right away as contraception, so you only need to abstain 24 hours after insertion.**
- Longer, heavier menstrual flow (up to 50% increase) experienced by most users.
- Increased cramping during menstruation is experienced by most users but if it is more than expected, and not improving with treatment, contact the clinic for further assessment.
- Consider taking ibuprofen (Advil) for the first few days of your regular periods/bleeds to minimize both the amount of bleeding and cramping going forward.
- **Check your strings a few times within the first few weeks after insertion**, sooner if very heavy bleeding, cramping or pain with sex. Wash your hands before checking. It is normal to feel either “both strings” or only feel “one string.” If you prefer, your partner can check for you instead. If you are unable to locate the strings, please book an in-person assessment.
- The strings will soften and usually curve around your cervix, so your partner should not feel them during sex. If a partner finds them uncomfortable, you may need the string length adjusted by an IUD provider, but this is not very common.
- **Follow up phone/virtual** appointments are recommended 4-6 weeks after your IUD is inserted. **We recommend that you book this appointment as you leave the clinic.**
- We advise STI screening as needed and routine pap testing as recommended.
- Consider checking your strings **once a month** following your period/bleed as this is the most likely time for an expulsion to occur with a copper IUD, especially if you experience heavy flow or significant cramping.
- **Plan to do a Pregnancy Test AND check your strings AND book an appointment if** any unexpected pain with sex, major change in bleeding or cramping, new breast/chest tenderness or nausea. If you think your IUD strings have significantly lengthened, or you can feel a plastic “device” at the opening of your cervix, or the IUD has fallen out, **use a condom** or abstain from intercourse until you can follow up with a care provider.

### When to contact a healthcare provider (PAINS):

- P** - Prolonged or excessive cramping or heavy bleeding.
- A** - Abdominal pain or pelvic pain with intercourse
- I** - Infection symptoms (FEVER, chills, foul smelling discharge)
- N** - No IUD strings present, or if you feel a plastic “device” coming out of the cervix.
- S** - Symptoms of pregnancy and/or positive pregnancy test