

Following your 'coil' fitting

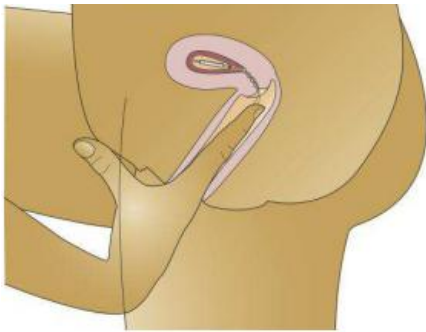
Patient Information

The aim of this leaflet is to give you information following your 'coil' fitting.

Following fitting

Your new 'coil' is going to work (please tick):

- Straight away
- In one week: please use condoms, continue with your current method or abstain from sex until 7 days have passed.



One in twenty 'coils' will come out spontaneously. This happens usually in the first 3 months after the fitting and during menstruation. Please check therefore that you can feel your 'coil' threads coming out of the neck of your womb (cervix) regularly, (see picture). This is especially important in the first few months.

Your cervix is at the top of your vagina, has the form of a 'mini doughnut' and feels quite firm. You should check your threads after each period, or around once per month. You might find adding a reminder to your (electronic) calendar or mobile phone helpful. There is no need to feel both threads – even if you only feel one thread your 'coil' is likely in place.

- If at any point you cannot feel your threads, especially when you have been able to feel them at other times, you can feel the stem of the device or if you think your device has fallen out, then do not rely on the 'coil' for contraception. Seek advice immediately as emergency contraception may be required.
- Seek medical advice if you think you might be pregnant, for example, having a late period with the copper 'coil' or suffering from pregnancy symptoms such as nausea, sore breasts, etc with the hormone 'coil', as light or absent periods are very common with the latter. Women who get pregnant with a 'coil' need an early ultrasound scan to locate the pregnancy, as there is a higher risk of an ectopic pregnancy (outside the womb).

Many menstrual cup (for example Mooncup) users are happily using their cup alongside a 'coil'. Please remember to insert the cup low in your vagina, to break the seal and not to pinch the cup pulling on the threads of your 'coil' before removing the cup. Please check the website for your menstruation cup provider for more specific advice. Routine 'coil checks' by a nurse or doctor are not necessary if you can feel your threads and you are happy with the coil' settling in.

Please contact your GP if you have any problems finding your 'coil' threads.

If you had your copper 'coil' fitted as emergency contraception; please do a pregnancy test in 3 weeks, unless you had a normal period at the expected time.

If you had a late change of your hormone 'coil'; please do a pregnancy test in 4 weeks.

If you had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening test taken at the time of fitting, please remember to call for results one week after your appointment.

If you have a new sexual partner or have more than one partner, we advise the use of condoms as this will give you protection against STIs, including pelvic infections. This is particularly important in the first weeks after the 'coil' fitting. You could stop using condoms after both you and your partner have been screened and the tests are negative. Your health care provider will be happy to provide you with condoms.

Please note when your 'coil' is due to be changed in a calendar and keep the reminder card. Depending on the type, hormone 'coils' last between 3 and 6 years; and copper 'coils' between 5 and 10 years.

It is your responsibility to arrange to have your 'coil' removed or replaced when it is about to expire.

When to seek advice

- Cramping discomfort which comes and goes is very common following 'coil' fitting and can last for a few days or weeks. Regular painkillers, for example, Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen or a hot water bottle will help. If pain is constant or is severe, you should seek medical advice.
- You may notice an increase in the amount of vaginal discharge initially, which is usually watery. If the discharge becomes much heavier or has an odour, please seek advice.
- Irregular bleeding between your periods is very common in the weeks or months following fitting, particularly with the hormone 'coil'. This can be a bit of a nuisance but is quite normal. The bleeding varies in amount and duration from person to person but is usually not heavy or painful. It generally settles within the first 3 to 6 months following fitting. If bleeding is very heavy, prolonged or painful, please seek medical advice.
- If you have had a hormone 'coil', your periods may get much lighter or stop altogether. This is nothing to worry about. If you wish, you can do a pregnancy test 4 weeks after 'coil' fitting. After that a pregnancy test is usually not necessary unless you develop pelvic pain or pregnancy symptoms (for example, nausea, vomiting, sore breasts, and dizziness).
- If you have had a copper 'coil', your period may get heavier, longer and more painful, especially over the first months. A simple painkiller like Ibuprofen taken regularly can help with both bleeding and pain.

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