

Getting an Intrauterine Device (IUD) Right After Giving Birth

Why should you use birth control right after having a baby?

Your return to fertility after having a baby can be unpredictable. You may be able to get pregnant before your next period begins. Using birth control to help plan for your future family is important. Waiting at least a **year and a half** *before* trying to become pregnant again can help improve your health and the health of your next baby.

What is an intrauterine device (IUD)?

An IUD is a very effective, reversible, and long-lasting form of birth control. It is made of a T-shaped plastic rod that stays in your uterus.

Once the IUD is placed, it prevents pregnancy in over 99% of woman who use it. The IUD can be removed at any time by your provider (doctor, midwife, nurse practitioner) or at the Health Department.

What is immediate postpartum IUD?

Immediate postpartum IUD is a convenient, safe, and effective way of starting birth control right after having your baby. Getting an IUD right after giving birth means the provider inserts the IUD after you deliver your placenta. This happens in your labor and delivery room. If you have a cesarean section (C-section), the provider will place the IUD while you are in the operating room. All types of IUDs can be placed right after giving birth.

How does immediate postpartum IUD placement compare to IUD placement in the clinic?

When IUDs are placed right after giving birth, they may have a higher chance of falling out. This is called IUD expulsion. This means that the IUD is partly or completely out of your uterus. An IUD expulsion is not a danger and will not damage your cervix or uterus. But it may be uncomfortable for you and the IUD may not work as birth control. The chances of having an IUD expulsion are as follows:

- If placed during a C-section, the chance of having an IUD expulsion is 8%.
- If placed after a vaginal delivery, the chance of having an IUD expulsion is 12 to 30%.
- When placed in the clinic, the chance of having an IUD expulsion is less than 5%.

It may feel better to place an IUD right after you give birth. This depends on the type of pain medicine you used while giving birth. Placing an IUD right after giving birth has **not** been linked with:

- Increased rates of infection
- Damage to your uterus
- Bleeding after you give birth

IUDs & Breastfeeding

Placement of the hormonal: IUDs placed right after giving birth have **not** been shown to affect breastfeeding. But, you may have other risk factors for breastfeeding problems and the use of IUD right after giving birth has not been studied in these cases. These risks may include:

- Having a baby born before 37 weeks
- Low birth weight baby
- Past breastfeeding problems
- Past breast surgery
- Significant anemia
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Infertility.

Your provider can help you see if you have any of these risk factors. For women with one or more of these risk factors, extra measures may be taken to protect your milk supply.

For breastfeeding women, feed your baby often on demand (8 to 12 times a day). Avoid supplementing with formula unless told by your baby's provider. If your milk supply seems low, ask to speak to a lactation consultant.

Placement of the nonhormonal **Paragard®**: will not affect your ability to breastfeed.

If you do not love your IUD for any reason, it can be removed any time by your provider or at the Health Department.

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