

Advice Before A Coil Is Fitted

Timing of Coil Fit:

- Before a coil can be fitted it is important that there is no chance you are pregnant.
- Continue regular, effective contraception up until your coil fitting.
- The ideal time to fit a coil is when we can be sure there is no risk of pregnancy; it is fine to fit a coil whilst you are on your period. The insertion procedure may be easier at this time in your cycle, however it can be fitted at other times in your menstrual cycle as long as you are not pregnant.
- If you are using condoms, it may be best to try to abstain, as if you have a burst condom and take emergency contraception in the 7 days before fitting, we may not be able to fit the coil. We do not accept the withdrawal method as a way of preventing pregnancy as there is always a risk.
- If you don't have periods at present (e.g. during breastfeeding or whilst using other methods of contraception), a coil fit can be arranged at any time providing there is no chance of pregnancy. In some circumstances a negative pregnancy test may be needed before a coil can be fitted. To rely on a negative result, effective contraception, or abstinence from sex (having no sex) is required for the 3 weeks before the pregnancy test.
- After having a baby, it is advisable to wait 4 weeks before a coil is fitted (unless it is fitted in the 1st 48hrs after giving birth). There are other appropriate forms of contraception available to use before this time (see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/support-and-services/sex-and-contraception-after-birth/> <https://www.contraceptionchoices.org/> or discuss with a nurse/GP).

Coil Replacement:

- If you already have a coil in place, please either abstain from sexual intercourse or use a condom carefully in the 7 days before you attend. Sperm can live in the pelvis for 7 days, so there is a theoretical chance of pregnancy if this advice is not followed, as, on rare occasions it may not be possible to fit the replacement coil successfully.

- If you are attending for a replacement coil and your coil change is overdue, you are advised to use an alternative form of contraception. In some cases, a negative pregnancy test, after at least 3 weeks of contraception/abstinence may be required before the coil can be changed.

Before the Fitting:

You should have had an appointment with one of the practice nurses to go through the coil procedure and risks, and the options of coils will be mentioned. They will have sent you a couple of texts:

1. One text includes a video about the coil fitting and some written information on both coil options (hormonal and non-hormonal)
2. The other text reminds you to watch the video, to read the attached consent form, and to respond to the text to confirm you have read the consent form and agree to the coil fitting.

You can change your mind at any time about the coil fitting even if you have responded to say Yes. It is important though if you do want to have the coil fitting that you respond to the text. You will still be able to ask any questions before the appointment via the nurses, or with the coil fitter on the day of the appointment.

- Please take some painkillers an hour before the procedure (either ibuprofen 400mg (with or after food) or paracetamol 1g, or both, as long as you are not allergic to these) as some people can experience discomfort, like period cramps, during coil insertions.
- Some people can feel a little faint during and after the fitting. It is therefore advisable to have someone with you or someone you can contact by telephone in case you feel unwell.
- If possible, ask a friend to drive you or accompany you home.
- Please ensure to arrange for someone else to look after any children/dependents during a coil fit.
- It is usual practice to offer a chlamydia test before fitting an IUD/IUS to all our patients. This should have been done in the few weeks before

fitting, but if for some reason this hasn't happened, the swab may be taken at the time of the coil insertion.

- In some rare circumstances where we may be concerned about a high risk of infection, we will offer antibiotics to take prior to the coil fitting, whilst awaiting the results of the swab.
- Please wear loose, comfortable clothes and footwear on the day of fitting, ensure to be hydrated and have eaten.
- You can change your mind about having a coil fitted at ANY time.

The Fitting Process:

- Please allow up to an hour for the appointment. You are welcome to bring someone to support you, but please be aware that you will be asked some personal questions. You may have some music on during the procedure from your own device.
- The doctor will ask questions to check the coil is suitable for you and which coil you have chosen. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions, before giving your verbal consent to proceed with the fitting. If at any stage you change your mind about the fitting, the procedure can be stopped. This is your body, and you are in control, so please say if you would like to pause the procedure, or if you want to stop.
- A vaginal examination will be undertaken to check which way your womb lies (every woman is different), a speculum (a plastic device) inserted into your vagina to see the cervix (like what happens with a smear test), and then the coil fitted.
- Most people describe having a coil fitted as a mild to moderate, deep cramping discomfort. Every person's body is different, some will hardly feel a coil being fitted, whilst others may find it more painful. For most people, the part that causes the deep cramping will only last a few minutes and then your coil will be in.
- The doctor and nurse will do their best to reassure you and make the procedure as pleasant as it can be, talk to your coil fitter if you have concerns. Every clinic can offer a local numbing gel or spray which we can

apply to your cervix, this may help with discomfort, but it won't take it away completely.

- You will be given advice after fitting about what to expect and when to come back.
- Please ensure you have no major commitments afterwards as you may need to take it easy and relax for the rest of the day.

Possible Risks:

- Discomfort – v mild to severe pain/dizziness/fainting on insertion/shock
- Infection - highest in 1st 3 weeks after fitting (test advised before fitting)
- Expulsion or change of position (up to 1 in 20 - highest in 1st year)
- Failure (<1 in 100 in 1 year)
- Ectopic pregnancy if pregnancy occurs
- Damage to cervix or womb including perforation (up to 1 in 500: risk 6x higher if breastfeeding) during insertion or after the procedure
- Altered vaginal bleeding (IUS: spotting or irregular/prolonged bleeding 3-6 months; IUD: heavier/more painful/prolonged periods)
- Hormonal effects with IUS - greasy skin, mood changes, weight change

After the Fitting:

You will be provided with further information and guidance after a fitting, see https://www.unhs.co.uk/website/C84023/files/Advice_After_Coil_Fitted.pdf

Coil removal

- Prior to removal please either abstain from sexual intercourse or use a condom carefully in the 7 days before you attend for the coil removal.
- As long as there is no risk of pregnancy (by avoiding sex 7 days prior to removal), a coil can be removed at any time by a trained nurse or doctor gently pulling on the threads. We recommend trying the method for at least 3-6 months to see if it suits you before having it removed, you can see a nurse if requiring a trial of oral hormone contraception alongside to help with irregular bleeding patterns (this will be checked if a safe option).