

### KEY FACTS

- The copper IUD is the most effective form of emergency contraception (EC).
- Any woman who is not pregnant and wants to avoid pregnancy, regardless of age, can use the copper IUD as EC if inserted up to five days after unprotected sex.
- The copper IUD has the added benefit of serving as long-term birth control.
- The only copper IUD currently manufactured in the United States is Paragard®.

### Can the intrauterine device (IUD) be used as emergency contraception?

- Yes, the copper IUD is the most effective form of emergency contraception (EC). It is more than 99% effective at preventing pregnancy if inserted up to five days after unprotected sex, and its effectiveness does not decrease over time during the five day period as do EC pills containing levonorgestrel. <sup>\*,1,2</sup>
- Currently, the copper IUD is the only IUD that has been studied as EC. <sup>∞,1</sup>
- Once the copper IUD has been inserted as EC, it can be left in place as an ongoing contraceptive method for up to 10 years. <sup>\*,†</sup>

### Who can use the copper IUD as emergency contraception?

- Any woman who is not pregnant and wants to avoid a pregnancy, regardless of age, can use the copper IUD as emergency contraception (EC) if inserted up to five days after unprotected sex.<sup>2</sup>

### Other Relevant Information

- In addition to being the most effective form of EC, the copper IUD is one of the most effective forms of birth control that a woman can choose. It offers protection against pregnancy for up to 10 years, or until a woman is ready to become pregnant.<sup>2</sup>
- The copper IUD can also help facilitate longer contraceptive use. Studies have shown that women seeking EC who chose the copper IUD over EC pills were more likely to be using effective contraception and were less likely to have a pregnancy 12 months later.<sup>2</sup>
- The copper IUD works just as effectively in women with higher body mass index, making it the most effective EC choice for overweight and obese women.<sup>‡</sup>
- To locate a birth control provider in your community, visit [http://bedsider.org/where\\_to\\_get\\_it](http://bedsider.org/where_to_get_it)
- To locate an IUD or implant provider in your community, visit <http://larc.arhp.org/>

### References

1. Cleland K, Zhu H, Goldstuck N, Cheng L, Trussell J. The efficacy of intrauterine devices for emergency contraception: a systematic review of 35 years of experience. *Human Reproduction* 2012; 27(7).
2. International Consortium for Emergency Contraception. The intrauterine device for emergency contraception. September 2012.
3. Trussell J, Raymond EG, Cleland K. Emergency contraception: a last chance to prevent unintended pregnancy.
4. Glasier A, Cameron ST, Bliithe D, Scherrer B, Mathe H, Levy D, Gainer E, Ulmann A. Can we identify women at risk of pregnancy despite using emergency contraception? Data from randomized trials of ulipristal acetate and levonorgestrel. *Contraception*. 2011; 84:363-7.

5. Moreau C, Trussell J. Results from pooled Phase III studies of ulipristal acetate for emergency contraception. *Contraception*. 2012;86:673-680.
6. Turok DK, Gurtcheff SE, Handley E, et al. A pilot study of the copper T380a IUD and oral levonorgestrel for emergency contraception. *Contraception* 2010; 82(6), 520-525.

\* Emergency contraception (EC) pills containing levonorgestrel (such as Plan B One-Step® or Next Choice®) are most effective when taken as soon as possible within five days (or 120 hours) after unprotected intercourse. EC pills containing ulipristal acetate (such as ella®) remains equally effective up to five days (or 120 hours) after unprotected intercourse.

∞ The use of the copper IUD, or ParaGard®, as emergency contraception (EC) is off-label as it is not formally approved for EC use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

^ The hormonal IUDs have not been studied as a form of EC and therefore, are not recommended for EC.

† The copper IUD, or ParaGard®, is approved for use for up to 10 years by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

‡ In recent clinical trials of women using emergency contraception pills, levonorgestrel emergency contraception pills (such as Plan B One-Step® or Next Choice®) were found to have reduced efficacy in women who were overweight or obese. Specifically, women who were obese with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater became pregnant more than three times more often than women who were not obese. Ulipristal acetate (ella®) appeared to lose effectiveness at a higher BMI of 35.

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*We have developed a series of Frequently Asked Questions to assist providers and healthcare institutions interested in offering IUDs to their patients. These guides are intended to be a starting point for providing IUDs by addressing basic questions. The answers are compiled from a selection of references and the general knowledge of our Patient Access Workgroup membership. For technical guidance and protocols, please refer to the clinical protocols of your own organization or the references provided within the FAQs.*

**About the IUD Taskforce.** The NYC IUD Taskforce aims to ensure that everyone has access to a full range of contraceptive methods, including IUDs and implants, known as long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs). The Taskforce seeks to address the systemic barriers (financial, institutional, legal, and educational) that may limit knowledge, awareness, access, and use of LARCs. More than 50 medical providers, educators, administrators, public health professionals, reproductive health advocates, and researchers from more than 25 New York City-based organizations currently serve on the IUD Taskforce. The IUD Taskforce's central activities are concentrated in the Taskforce workgroups, comprised of voluntary members that meet regularly.

**About the Patient Access Workgroup.** The Patient Access Workgroup of the NYC IUD Taskforce aims to improve IUD access for all women in New York City by identifying existing barriers to access and remediating the barriers through educational initiatives and other interventions.

For additional FAQs and guidance on providing IUDs at your organization as well as general questions about IUDs, visit <http://iudtaskforce.org/Resources>

For further information, please visit [IUDTaskforce.org](http://IUDTaskforce.org) or email us at [IUDTaskforce@healthsolutions.org](mailto:IUDTaskforce@healthsolutions.org)