

## KEY FACTS

- IUDs and contraceptive implants are the most effective reversible methods for preventing unintended pregnancy, rapid repeat pregnancy, and abortion in young women.
- Contraception counseling during healthcare visits is important for all sexually active teens.
- Since LARC methods do not provide protection against STIs, condom use must always be recommended.

### Is the intrauterine device (IUD) an appropriate contraceptive method for adolescents?

- [The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology \(ACOG\)](#) guidelines state that the IUD is appropriate for adolescents.<sup>1</sup> IUDs and contraceptive implants, also known as Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARCs), are the most effective, reversible methods for preventing unintended pregnancy, rapid repeat pregnancy, and abortion in young women.
- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) guidelines also indicate that LARCs are highly effective and appropriate for most women, including adolescents and nulliparous women.<sup>2</sup>

### What are some noncontraceptive benefits of the IUD?

- The hormonal IUD may decrease heavy menstrual flow and decrease menstrual cramps.<sup>3</sup>
- IUD use can have a protective effect on endometrial cancer risk, which affects the lining of the uterus.<sup>4</sup> Research has shown that there is a strong inverse association between the use of IUDs and the development of cervical cancer, in which the IUD may provoke an immune response to the human papillomavirus (HPV), the main cause of cervical cancer.<sup>5</sup>

### What types of counseling should be offered to adolescents who decide to use IUDs?

- All sexually active adolescents should be counseled about contraception at any relevant health care provider visit.
- Health care providers should consider LARC methods for all adolescents and make these methods accessible to them at their own sites or with outside referrals.<sup>1</sup>
- *Pre- and Post-Insertion Counseling:* In general, counseling about pre- and post- management is the same for adolescents and adults. Providers should discuss possible side effects and ways to manage them so their patients know what to expect, which might increase method continuation. Patients should be informed that the IUD can be removed at any time, for any reason.
- *Counseling after Selection:* Counseling should review possible irregular bleeding and expected pain at insertion and cramps thereafter. Patients may be advised to use non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) to alleviate the pain.<sup>1</sup>

### Are negative sexually transmitted infections (STI) test results required prior to insertion?

- ACOG guidelines recommend that adolescents be screened for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including chlamydia and gonorrhea, before or at the time of the IUD insertion.<sup>1</sup> If the test results are positive, antibiotic treatment may be administered while the IUD is left in place.
- A potential contraindication to IUD insertion is mucopurulent discharge or known gonorrhea or chlamydia cervicitis. The patient should be treated and return for the insertion after treatment.<sup>6,7</sup>

## Do IUDs cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)?

- No, current FDA-approved IUDs do not cause PID. Once the IUD has been in place, there is no increased risk of infection due to its presence. Women with untreated STIs at the time of insertion are more likely to develop PID than women who do not, but the risk still appears low. PID and STIs can be treated with the IUD in place and the IUD should be removed only if symptoms are not improving on appropriate treatment.<sup>6,8</sup>

## Are condoms still necessary?

- Yes, dual protection is important. Since IUDs do not protect against the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and other STIs, condom use should always be recommended.<sup>1</sup>

## Can an IUD be inserted on the same day for adolescents?

- Yes, an IUD can be inserted on the same day for all women, including adolescents, as long as the provider can reasonably exclude pregnancy.<sup>6</sup> Refer to the [FAQ: Same-Day IUD Insertion](#) for more information.

## How do the two types of IUDs affect periods?

- The non-hormonal, copper IUD is recommended for adolescents who prefer to get monthly menses, if they can tolerate the cramping in the first weeks to months. The hormonal IUD works better for adolescents who prefer lighter to no menses and fewer cramps.<sup>4</sup> This is an intricate conversation to have with adolescents.

## Are IUDs associated with infertility?

- No, the IUD is not associated with infertility. Fertility returns after the IUD is removed.<sup>4,6</sup>

## Are there specific consent forms for adolescents?

- No, adolescents who are able to consent for reproductive health care can sign the same consent form as adult patients. Adolescents have a right to confidential reproductive health care in New York State.<sup>9</sup>

## Useful Resources for Patients:

- [Planned Parenthood](#)
- [Bedsider](#)
- [IUD Birth Control For Teenagers](#)
- [The Center for Young Women's Health](#)

## References

1. ACOG Committee on Adolescent Health Care, LARC Working Group Opinion #539. October 2012.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. U.S. Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) Early Release, vol. 59. May 2010.
3. Hubacher D, Grimes DA. "Noncontraceptive Health Benefits of Intrauterine Devices: A Systematic Review." *Obstetrical & Gynecological Survey*. 2002. 57(2): 120-128.
4. Benschushan A., et al. "IUD use and the risk of endometrial cancer." *European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*. 2002. 105 (2): 166-169.
5. Castellsagué, X., et al. Intrauterine device use, cervical infection with human papillomavirus, and risk of cervical cancer: a pooled analysis of 26 epidemiological studies. *The Lancet Oncology*. 2011. 12(11): 1023-1031.
6. ACOG. "Practice Bulletin #121 - Long-Acting Reversible Contraception: Implants and Intrauterine Devices." *Obstetrics & Gynecology*. July 2011. 118(1):184-196.
7. Deans EI, Grimes DA. "Intrauterine devices for adolescents: A systematic review." *Contraception*. 2009. 79: 418-423.
8. World Health Organization. "Medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use." 4th ed. Geneva: WHO; 2009.
9. NYCLU. "Teenagers, Health Care & the Law: A Guide to the Law on Minors' Rights in New York State." 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: 2013.

*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)