

# THINKING OF HAVING A COIL FITTED?

Before you attend for a coil fit or refit there are few things you need to know.

## Before the procedure:

### 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 during your period, around the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day of bleeding. The insertion procedure is easier at this time in the menstrual cycle.
- If you don't have periods at present, for example during breastfeeding, 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 is required for the 3 weeks before the pregnancy test.

### After a baby:

- It is advisable to wait 4 weeks after having a baby before a coil is fitted, there are other forms of contraception available to use in the first 4 weeks after having a baby (for more information visit <http://www.patient.co.uk/health/contraception-after-having-a-baby>, or discuss with a GP)

### Coil replacement:

- If you are having a coil removed and a new coil replaced please avoid sex or use condoms for 7 days before the procedure. In a small number of women it isn't possible to refit the coil and if unprotected sex has taken place in the preceding 7 days there is a risk of pregnancy.
- If you are attending for a replacement coil and your coil change is overdue you are advised to use an alternative form of contraception e.g. condoms. In some cases a negative pregnancy test, after at least 3 weeks of contraception/abstinence, may be required before the coil can be changed.

### Risk of infection / Infection screening:

- If there is infection present in genital tract at the time of coil insertion, fitting a coil can make the infection more serious. Swabs are offered routinely to all patients before a coil fit. Unless you consider yourself low risk for sexually transmitted infections it is a good idea to book in for swabs at least 2 weeks prior to a coil fit. Swabs would be recommended for anyone with symptoms of infection (though infection may be present without symptoms) and for anyone who has had a change of sexual partner within the last few years.

### Pain relief

- During coil insertions some women experience discomfort, like period cramps. You may wish to take painkillers an hour before the procedure to reduce this.

## After your coil fitting

- Use additional contraception for 7 days unless the doctor who fits your coil advises otherwise.
- You may experience light bleeding or cramping, if the pain is more uncomfortable than a period talk to a doctor.
- Book in for a coil check appointment with a GP 6 weeks after your coil fit.
- Avoid tampons for the first 3 cycles after coil insertion (to reduce the risk of expulsion).

## More information

More information about coils:

- Mirena coil (hormone)(IUS) <http://www.patient.co.uk/health/intrauterine-system-ius-leaflet>
- Copper coil (non-hormone) (IUD) <http://www.patient.co.uk/health/intrauterine-contraceptive-device-iucd-leaflet>

More information about general contraceptive choices:

- <http://www.patient.co.uk/health/contraceptive-choices>
- <http://www.fpa.org.uk/help-and-advice/contraception-help>