# LEVONORGESTREL (intrauterine system - IUS)

*lee-voe-nor-jes-trel*

## What does it do?

*Levonorgestrel* intrauterine system (IUS) is used to prevent pregnancy. It is also used to treat heavy bleeding or endometriosis.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have problems with your uterus or cervix.

## How is it given?

*Levonorgestrel* IUS is inserted into your uterus by a health professional.
Your IUS can stay in place for 3 years (Jaydess®) or 5 years (Mirena®).

Visit the Family Planning website for more information:
www.familyplanning.org.nz/advice/contraception/intra-uterine-device-iud
www.familyplanning.org.nz/advice/contraception/iud-insertion-instructions

## Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

Some women have period-like cramps or feel faint when their IUS is inserted. Taking paracetamol or ibuprofen and having something to eat before your appointment may help prevent this. You may also want to have someone to drive you home, and to be able to rest for a while afterwards.

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Severe tummy pain or heavy bleeding after insertion<br>Symptoms of an infection including: severe tummy pain, fever, or pain during sex | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Changes in periods | Irregular bleeding is common in the first 3-6 months. This is not harmful and usually improves with time. After this, some women will not have any periods at all. |
| Mood changes, headache<br>Acne<br>Weight gain<br>Sore breasts<br>Vaginal itch/discharge<br>Stomach upset | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- Use pads rather than tampons for 48 hours after your IUS is inserted.
- If your IUS is inserted within 7 days of the start of your period, it is effective straight away. If it is inserted after this, you need to use extra protection such as condoms for 7 days.
- Your IUS should be checked by a health professional about 6 weeks after it is inserted.
- Sometimes the IUS can come out by itself. You should be able to feel the IUS threads inside your vagina. Check the threads are still in place after each period, or at the start of each month. If you can't feel the threads, you should use a condom (or don't have sex) until your health professional has checked the IUS is still in place. Talk to your doctor if you think you may be pregnant.
- Your IUS does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.
- You can get pregnant as soon as your IUS is removed.
- An IUS is also known as an intrauterine device (IUD).