

# HOW TO REMOVE YOUR INTRAUTERINE DEVICE (IUD) BY YOURSELF

It is **SAFE** and **OKAY** to remove your IUD at home for **ANY REASON**.

Although it may seem intimidating at first, this guide will explain how to do it, answer common questions, and provide helpful tips. Please read through the entire sheet before you begin.

## WHEN TO REMOVE YOUR IUD

You have the right to have your IUD removed at any time, even if you just got it inserted and decide you do not want it. You can remove your IUD before it expires if you want to get pregnant or if you just do not want it inside of you anymore for any reason.

If you are removing your IUD because it has expired, know that there is no physical harm in keeping it inside of you longer, however, it will **stop preventing pregnancy**.

- The copper IUD Paragard is labeled for 10 years of use, but research shows it works up to 12 years.
- The hormonal IUD Mirena is labeled for 8 years of use.
- The hormonal IUD Liletta is labeled for 6 years of use, but research shows it works up to 7 years.
- The hormonal IUD Kyleena is labeled for 5 years of use.
- The hormonal IUD Skyla is labeled for 3 years of use.

*If you are removing your IUD because your provider is encouraging you to keep it in longer or will not remove it for you, consider getting a new provider who respects your desires. In the meantime, you can take out your own IUD.*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *Is it safe to remove my IUD myself?*

Yes. Removing your own IUD is just as safe as removal in a provider's office. Your provider removes the IUD in the same way by pulling on the strings, they just use forceps instead of their fingers.

### *Will it hurt?*

It might, but any pain should be brief, and at the end of removal as the IUD is almost out. You can take 600mg of Ibuprofen 30-60 minutes before you remove it to help with cramping.

### *What if I start and want to stop?*

You can stop at any time; however, the IUD will no longer protect you from pregnancy once you begin removing it. If you stop while feeling pain, at that point the IUD is most likely in your cervix, and another good pull should get it out.

### *What if I cannot feel the strings?*

The strings may be wrapped around your cervix. Try moving your fingers further into your vagina in a circular motion around your cervix. If you still cannot feel the strings, they may have been cut very short during insertion. If you cannot feel the strings, you will need to go to a provider to have the IUD removed.

### *Can I use something other than my fingers to grab the strings?*

No. Do not put anything other than your fingers (in a latex glove if needed/desired) inside your vagina. Putting anything else into your vagina can lead to injury or complications.

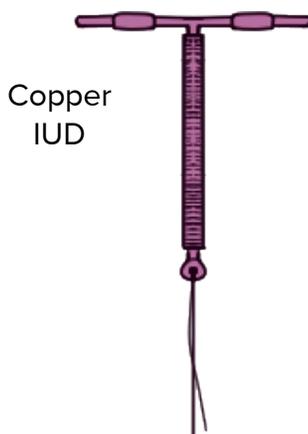
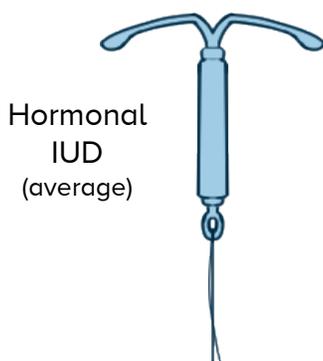
### *Should I remove my IUD at a specific time during my monthly cycle?*

It does not matter what time of the month you remove your IUD. During menstruation, the blood may make the IUD strings a bit more slippery.

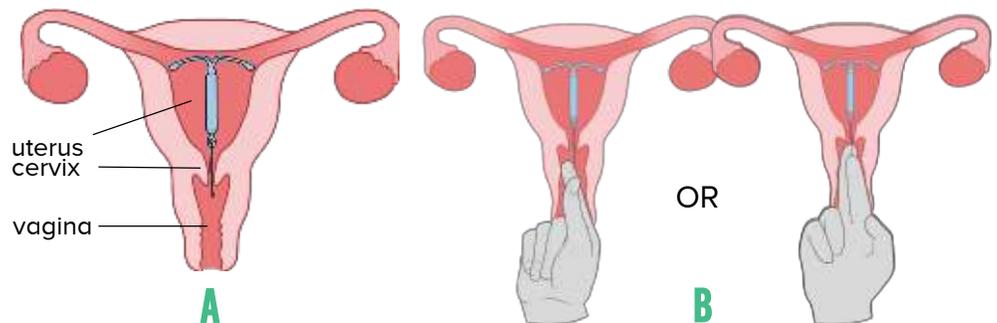
## HOW TO REMOVE YOUR IUD

1. Remove pants and underwear. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
2. Sit, squat, or lift your leg so that you can comfortably reach inside yourself.  
It may help to sit at the edge of your bed with your legs on a chair in front of you, on the edge of your toilet, in the butterfly position on the ground, put your feet against the wall like in stirrups, or place a foot on the toilet while standing or squatting.
3. Insert two fingers into your vagina. Try your pointer finger and thumb. If you cannot fit your thumb in, try your pointer and middle finger.
4. Moving your fingers in a circular motion, feel for the strings of your IUD near the top/back of your vagina, where the cervix is. Your cervix will feel like a hard bump, kind of like the tip of your nose.
5. The IUD strings may be slippery. If gripping is difficult, it may help to wear a new, clean surgical glove (like your doctor and dentist use). Do not attempt to douche or wipe off the strings with any towels or tissues.
6. Once you have a good grip on the strings, take a deep breath in and pull on the strings. It may help to cough while you pull to distract yourself from the feeling. You may have to breath, cough, and pull multiple times, readjusting your finger position on the strings to get a better grip.
7. Your IUD is out! Make sure your IUD is fully intact (*see images below*). If there is a part missing, see your provider. You can dispose of the IUD in a regular trashcan.

### ACTUAL SIZE OF IUDS

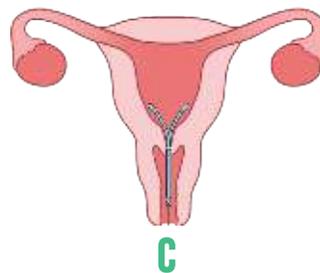


### WHAT HAPPENS DURING REMOVAL

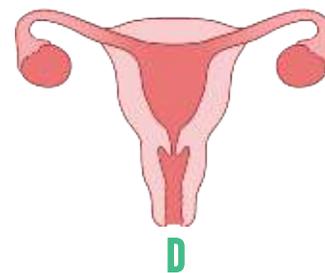


This is what the IUD looks like in your uterus

You will then grab the strings using your pointer/thumb or pointer/middle fingers



As you pull the strings, the IUD arms bend up as it passes through the cervix



You are done!