Intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD) aftercare

1. Uterine cramping is common after IUCD placement. You can help relieve the discomfort with heating pads, paracetamol or ibuprofen. If your cramping becomes very painful, please call the surgery.

2. Irregular bleeding and spotting is normal for the first few months after the IUCD is placed. In some cases, women may experience irregular bleeding or spotting for up to six months after the IUCD is placed. This bleeding can be annoying at first but usually will become lighter with the Mirena IUS quickly. Call the clinic if your bleeding is excessive and not getting better.

3. Your period will likely be shorter and lighter with a Mirena IUS. Approximately 40% of women will stop having periods altogether with the Mirena IUS. Your period may be heavier and longer with the Copper IUD.

4. IUCDs do not protect against sexually transmitted infections. Condoms should be used to decrease the risk sexually transmitted infections.

5. If you had the IUCD placed for birth control, the Copper IUD is effective immediately. The Mirena IUS is effective immediately if it was inserted within seven days after the start of your period. If you have Mirena inserted at any other time during your menstrual cycle, use another method of birth control, like condoms for at least 7 days.

6. It is possible for the IUCD to come out of the uterus. If it does slip out of place, it is most likely to happen in the first few months after being put in. To make sure your IUCD is in place, you can feel for the IUCD strings between periods. To check for strings, wash your hands. Then, sit or squat down. Place one finger into your vagina until you feel your cervix. It will feel hard and rubbery, like the end of your nose. The string ends should be coming through your cervix. Do not pull on the strings. If the strings feel much longer than before, if you feel the hard plastic part of the IUCD, or if you cannot feel the strings at all, the IUCD may have moved out of place. Please call us and consider using a back up form of birth control until you are seen.

7. Pregnancy is unlikely after IUCD placement, but can happen. If you have early pregnancy symptoms like nausea and vomiting, breast tenderness, frequent urination or abdominal pain, you can take a pregnancy test. Please call if you have any concerns or if your pregnancy test is positive.

8. The IUCD should only be removed by trained clinician

a. The Mirena IUS should be removed and/or replaced after 5 years.

b. The Copper IUD should be removed and/or replaced after 10 years.

Please call urgently if any of the following occurs:

• Severe abdominal pain or cramping

• Unusual bleeding

• Fever or chills

• Foul smelling vaginal discharge

• Painful intercourse