

The day of the IUD insertion

The goal of the day is to insert the IUD of your choice with the least amount of discomfort, but to also make sure that the IUD is deployed in the appropriate location in the uterus. The insertion procedure is seldom completely painless, but if it is done with the appropriate pain management protocol, the amount of discomfort is usually described as a 1 or 2 out of 10.

BEFORE THE INSERTION

The IUD insertion can be done anytime if there is no chance of a pregnancy, or at the end of your period. If you think that there is even the slightest chance of a pregnancy, we can do a urine pregnancy test in the office when you arrive. You are welcome to ask any questions or concerns you may have before going into the exam room.

You may need to take medication called **Arthrotec (1 pill)** 3-4 hours before the scheduled insertion time. It is to soften the cervix during the procedure, and minimize cramping after the insertion. It may cause some cramping or bleeding. It is best taken with a small meal, such as an apple or toast. It is recommended for women who have not had children, or only C/Sections.

Alternatively, **Ibuprofen (600 mg)** or **Naproxen (500 mg)** could be taken 1 hour before, and it is best for women who have had children, as the cervix tends to be more open.

In selected cases, you can also take a medication called **lorazepam (Ativan)** to decrease anxiety about 30-90 minutes before. If you take lorazepam, you cannot drive for 12 hours.

IN THE EXAMINING ROOM

After changing into a gown, you will be asked to lie on your back with your feet placed as for a pelvic exam. A speculum is inserted into the vagina to hold the walls of the vagina apart and allow a view of the cervix.

Swabs from the vagina and cervix are obtained, and a pap smear is taken, if required. The cervix is cleaned with a special solution. Freezing is injected into the cervix. Most women don't feel anything during the injection, but the freezing decreases the pain of the insertion by 70-90%. A clamp is inserted to hold the cervix steady.

The IUD is placed in a long, slender plastic tube. The tube is then inserted through the cervix into the uterus. The IUD is then pushed out of the plastic tube. The IUD springs open into place, and the tube is withdrawn. You will feel some cramping, from minimal to intense.

Each IUD comes with 2 strings or “tails” made out of a thin plastic thread. After the insertion, the strings are trimmed so that 2 cm or so will curve around the cervix but inside the vagina.

AFTER THE PROCEDURE

You should lay down for a few minutes. Most women can go home after 5-15 minutes, but some feel nauseated or dizzy, and may have to remain in the office longer. It is better to have a person available to drive you home - if needed. Further instructions are available in another pamphlet called “After the IUD insertion”. We’ll discuss it before you go home.

Dr. J.Z. Hendriks

Date