

Intrauterine contraception (IUC) insertion at the time of Caesarean birth

This leaflet is for individuals considering the insertion of intrauterine contraception (IUC) at the time of Caesarean birth

Contraception after having a baby

Pregnancy is possible as soon as three weeks after having a baby. Every person differs as to when they might feel ready or comfortable to have sex again after having a baby, and you should not feel pressured or worry about this. Nevertheless, many unplanned pregnancies do occur in the months after having a baby. Even if you would like more children, it is recommended to space pregnancies out by at least 12 months to allow yourself to recover and improve the chances of a healthy future pregnancy. Contraception comes in many forms and is a way to prevent or delay pregnancy.

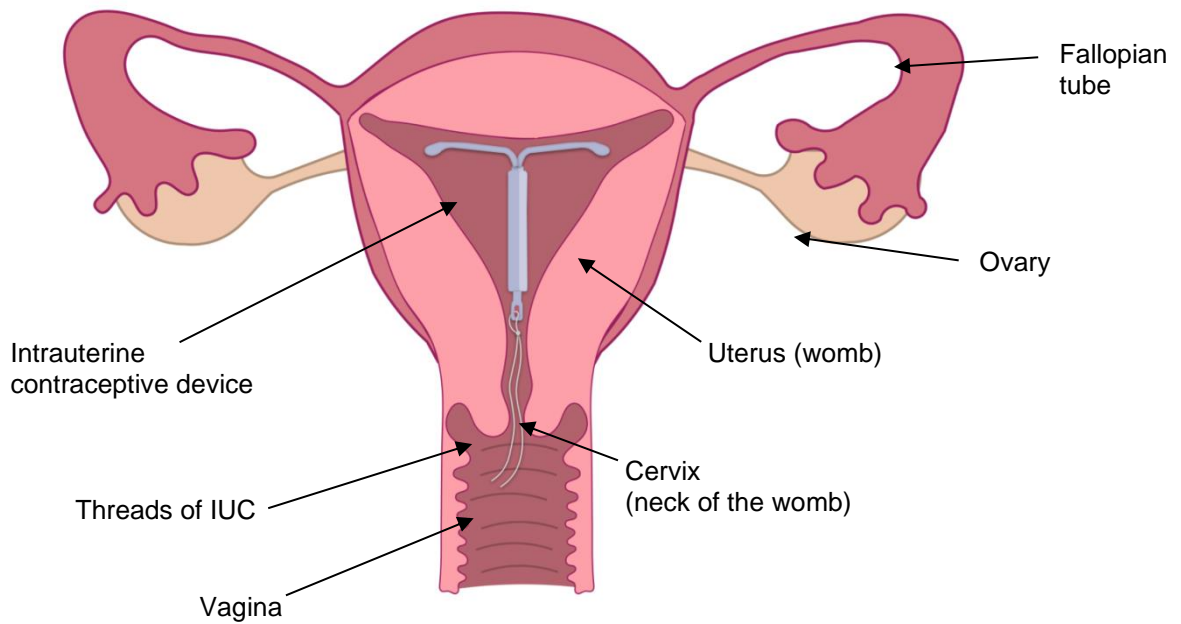
Intrauterine contraception at caesarean birth

Intrauterine contraception (IUC), previously known as a 'coil', is a safe and effective method of contraception. It is easy to have this fitted at the time of a caesarean birth. IUC is a small, flexible, plastic device. It is inserted through the opening in the uterus (womb), after the placenta (afterbirth) has been removed.

There are two main types:

- Progestogen (hormonal) intrauterine system (IUS)
- Copper (non-hormonal) intrauterine device (IUD)

Image of IUC fitted inside the uterus (womb):



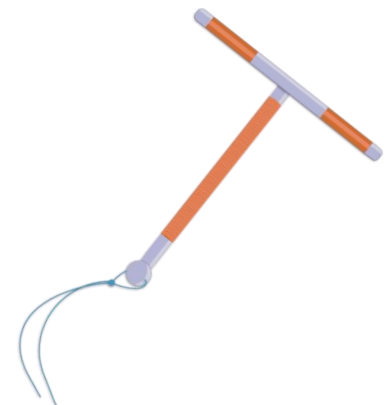
Hormonal intrauterine contraception (also known as intrauterine system or IUS)

- A small plastic device that releases the hormone progestogen.
- This hormone thickens the mucus at the cervix (neck of the womb) to stop sperm entering the uterus and thins the lining of the uterus so an egg cannot implant.
- In some women, it also stops the ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation), but most women will continue to ovulate.



The copper intrauterine contraception (also known as intrauterine device or IUD)

- A small device made from plastic and copper.
- Copper prevents sperm and egg from surviving. It may also stop a fertilised egg from implanting into the womb.



Why might you choose to have an IUC at Caesarean birth?

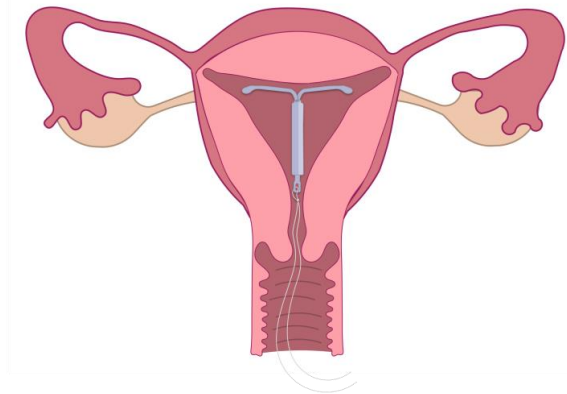
- The procedure is very safe and quick. It is painless as you will already have an anaesthetic (medication to prevent pain) for the birth.
- It provides protection from pregnancy straight away and for a long time after - 6 to 10 years, depending on device.
- IUC is convenient. You do not need to remember to take it every day like a pill, for example.
- IUC contraception is safe when breastfeeding.
- IUC is easy to remove and fertility returns straight away.

Is there anything else I need to know?

There are some specific risks of having intrauterine contraception fitted at the time of Caesarean birth:

Long threads

As your uterus returns to its pre-pregnancy size, you may notice the threads protruding out of the vagina. If this happens the threads can be easily trimmed by a doctor or nurse. If the threads are long, please be careful not to pull the IUD/IUS.



Non-Visible threads

The threads of the device usually come out of the cervix (the neck of the womb) and sit at the top of the vagina so you would not normally feel them. This is to make checking or removing the device more straightforward.

When the IUC is fitted at the time of Caesarean birth the threads can sometimes stay within the uterus. The IUC will still work in the same way and can still be removed with a straightforward procedure, but this will need to be done in Axess sexual health (contact details are provided further on in the leaflet).

Expulsion (falling out)

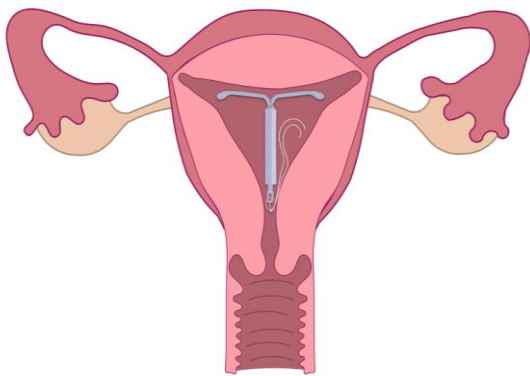
There is a 1 in 20 chance of the device coming out of the uterus after insertion. This may be slightly higher if having IUC fitted at the time of Caesarean birth. One study found a one in 12.5 chance of expulsion.

The following risks are present whether IUC is inserted at the time of Caesarean birth or inserted at a later date:

Injury or trauma

There is a less than 1 in 1000 chance of perforation (putting a hole) in the uterus at the time of insertion.

Infection



There is a less than 1 in 100 chance of infection in the first few weeks following insertion of the IUC.

Pregnancy risk

The risk of getting pregnancy whilst the IUC is in place is very low. However, if a pregnancy does occur there is a small risk of this being an ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy that develops outside of the uterus). It is important to seek medical attention if you find yourself pregnant with an IUC in place, or if you have any unusual pain in your lower abdomen.

What happens after the device is fitted?

We will arrange for you to have an ultrasound scan and a check to see if the threads need trimming around 6 weeks after the device was fitted. This will be at Axess at The Beat sexual health clinic in Liverpool. You will be contacted with an appointment time.

If before your appointment you experience any problems or have any concerns about your IUC, you can contact Axess at The Beat sexual health clinic on: **0300 323 1300 Option 4**

When the IUC is placed inside the womb at caesarean birth, there may be a higher chance that the threads will not be seen at the check-up visit. This does not affect how the IUC works and most can be removed easily when required.

What do I need to do if I want IUC inserted at the time of my Caesarean birth?

If you want to know more or would like to have an IUC inserted at the time of your Caesarean birth, please let your midwife or doctor know. They will be able to assess if this is a safe option for you and make any necessary arrangements.

I'm not sure – where can I find out more information?

You can have a look at the Axess sexual health website where you will find more information or ask your doctor or midwife for a leaflet.

Hormonal IUS:

<https://www.axess.clinic/information/contraception/hormonal-coil-ius/>

Copper IUD:

<https://www.axess.clinic/information/contraception/non-hormonal-coil-iud/>

More information on contraception choices after having a baby can be found at the following websites:

- NHS website
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/?tabname=getting-started>
- [Contraception Choices](http://www.contraceptionchoices.org)
www.contraceptionchoices.org

If you have any further questions you can speak to your midwife or doctor (GP or maternity doctor) or contact the dedicated team at Axess sexual health using the details below.

Axess at the Beat, Liverpool City Centre

Phone number: 0300 323 1300 and select Option 4.

This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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