**NIGHITINGALE VALLEY PRACTICE**

**PATIENT INFORMATION**

**Intra-uterine contraception (IUC) – after the procedure**

Name of device fitted \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of insertion\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date device is due to be changed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Please keep a note of this date as we are unable to send you a reminder when it needs to be changed)

1. You may choose to have your IUC checked after 3-6 weeks or following your next period. This can be performed at your GP surgery or at the clinic that fitted your IUC. If you have made an appointment for a check you may wish to make a note of the date here\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Checking your IUC threads**:

It is usually possible to feel the threads of the IUC inside the vagina to check it is in place. Your nurse or doctor will have advised you how to do this at time of fitting.

You should check for the threads of your IUC after each period or approximately monthly if you are not having regular periods.

If you cannot feel the threads then use an alternative contraceptive method such as condoms until you have had the opportunity to be seen by a doctor or nurse.

1. **You should seek medical attention if any of the following occur**:

* Prolonged lower abdominal pain after the IUC is inserted, lasting more than 2 weeks; or is getting worse with time; or which goes and then comes back again.
* Raised temperature associated with lower abdominal pain.
* Heavy bleeding following insertion (requiring more than 2 sanitary pad changes per hour; for more than 2 hours)
* Late menstrual period (with IUD)
* Abnormal vaginal discharge with an offensive odour; with or without pain
* You can feel the stem of the IUC
* You cannot feel your threads
* The IUC is causing discomfort to you or your partner during sex
* You have any other concerns

1. **Will I be in pain after the procedure?**
2. Having IUC fitted can be a little uncomfortable but this varies greatly from person to person. Some women may benefit from taking pain relief after the procedure in the form of ibuprofen or paracetamol. It is best to take something that you have used before and which you know you are able to tolerate. You may need to continue with your painkillers for the first 24-48 hours following your procedure, but this also varies from person to person. It might be helpful to make sure you have supplies at home.
3. **Will I bleed after the procedure?**
4. It is common to have some bleeding after the procedure. How long you bleed for will depend on the type of IUC you have had fitted. Bleeding is common in the first 3-6 months after IUS insertion and often settles without treatment.
5. Avoid tampons and use sanitary towels only for the first 7 days following the fitting of your IUD. After this time you can use sanitary towels or tampons of your choice.
6. If you use a Moon Cup, please be advised that the manufacturers recommend waiting 6 weeks after IUC insertion before using the menstrual cup.

**Will I need to restrict any other activities?**

You doctor or nurse will have advised you when you can rely on your IUC for contraception. The copper IUD is effective immediately but the hormonal IUS may take up to 7 days before it works. You should not be aware of the IUC when you are having sex. If the IUC causes discomfort to you or your partner during sexual intercourse you should seek medical advice.

Avoid the use of vibrating gym plates for the first 3-6 weeks.

1. Cervical screening tests or “smears” can be taken whilst your IUC is in place.

If you are ever referred for an MRI scan you should inform the radiology or x-ray department if you have a copper-IUD in place.

**Where can I go for more information**?

For further information you may visit the following website:

www.fpa.org.uk