



FACT SHEET

IUD/IUCD Implant (MultiloadCU375®) – Your Questions Answered

My next Multiload® check-up is on the:

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What is MultiloadCU375®?

The Multiload® IUD/IUCD (intrauterine contraceptive device) is a small plastic and copper device that is fitted into the uterus by a trained doctor. It only takes a couple of minutes to insert and can stay in place for up to five years.

How does it work?

Although it is not fully understood how the IUD works, Multiload® prevents sperm from fertilising an egg or prevents an egg from implanting in the uterus. Copper IUDs can be used as an emergency method of contraception within five days of unprotected intercourse, or five days after expected ovulation.

Will it work immediately?

Multiload® is effective immediately and should be inserted between the first to the fourteenth day of your cycle, where day one is the first day of your period. It can also be inserted immediately after a termination of pregnancy.

If you are using other methods of contraception and are changing to Multiload®, you will need to discuss with your doctor when is the best time for the device to be inserted to avoid unplanned pregnancy.

How long will it last?

Multiload® is a good method for women who want a long term, convenient contraceptive, as it lasts up to five years (although it can be removed at any time). It is very important to have it removed and/or replaced after this time. You should keep a record of the date that replacement is due and arrange for replacement no later than this date.

Your doctor will give you a card which records the date that your Multiload® must be removed/replaced. Ultimately it is your responsibility to make an appointment to visit your doctor.

How effective is it?

Multiload® is 98-99% effective – that is, if 100 women used it for a year, one to two of them might become pregnant. No contraceptive is 100% effective.

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What are the side effects?

Multiload® will not affect a woman's hormones, nor will it affect the menstrual cycle. However, the most common side effect is heavier, more painful or prolonged periods. Some women might also experience light spotting between periods, especially in the first few months after insertion just before menstruation is due. In most cases these side effects usually settle down after the first two to three months.

Another side effect is abdominal pain (similar to period cramps) just following the insertion. This can be relieved by resting, placing a hot water bottle on the area and/or by taking mild painkillers.

If you are at all concerned about any symptoms, contact your Marie Stopes International centre on **Freecall 1800 003 707** or doctor.

Who should not use Multiload®?

Before starting Multiload®, you need to inform your doctor if you:

- Might be pregnant
- Have a history of any unusual vaginal bleeding (including irregular bleeding, spotting or no bleeding at all)
- Have a history of painful or heavy periods
- Have an existing infection in the reproductive system or a history of recurrent pelvic infection
- Have had an ectopic pregnancy
- Have had a previous infection of the uterus or the tubes
- Have uterine or cervix abnormalities
- Have had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the past 12 months or are a high risk of contracting an STI.
- Are allergic to copper or have Wilson's disease
- Have had previous problems using an IUD

Multiload® may not be suitable for women who have never had a pregnancy, particularly younger women. Your Marie Stopes International doctor will talk with you about Multiload® and help you decide whether it is the best contraceptive method for you.

What if I want to stop using Multiload®? Is it reversible?

Multiload® is easily reversible and there is no delay in the return to fertility. Therefore you must start using another form of contraception immediately following the removal of the device in order to avoid unplanned pregnancy.

What else should I consider?

- If you experience pain during sexual intercourse, continuous lower abdominal pain, fever and/or unusual and persistent vaginal discharge occurs, this may indicate you have an infection. Please consult your doctor if this occurs.
- Women should not have microwave treatment to the abdomen or lower back with Multiload® in place as the copper device is warmed by the microwaves and might damage the uterus.
- If pregnancy occurs with Multiload® in place, it must be removed immediately as there is an increased risk of complications including miscarriage.
- IUDs offer no protection against STIs or HIV/AIDS.

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- There is evidence that Multiload® may increase the risk of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID).
- Although rare (1:1000), there is a possibility that Multiload® may perforate the uterus at the time of insertion. This would require surgery under general anaesthetic to remove the IUD.

Will my partner or I feel the device during intercourse?

Neither you nor your partner should be aware of the IUD during intercourse. If you experience any discomfort you should have the positioning checked by your doctor.

What if I am breastfeeding?

Multiload® is widely considered a very suitable and safe method of contraception in breastfeeding women.

How is Multiload® CU375 inserted?

Your doctor will firstly discuss and assess the suitability of Multiload® with you during an initial consultation (including the advantages and disadvantages). Following your consent, the doctor will insert a speculum into your vagina (the same as would occur if you were having a Pap smear) to view your cervix. The cervix and vagina are then cleaned with antiseptic lotion, and a thin, flexible plastic tube is then used to insert the Multiload® into the uterus. In some cases small amount of local anaesthetic may be used to numb the cervix and insertion only takes a few minutes.

Some women may find the insertion moderately uncomfortable or feel slightly faint after insertion or removal of the device. This is a normal reaction which should pass within a few minutes.

To avoid infection, do not insert anything in to the vagina for 48 hours following the insertion of Multiload® (i.e. avoid sexual penetration and use pads instead of tampons for two days after the insertion).

You will be asked to return for your first check-up after your first period, usually about six weeks after insertion. It is also important to have regular check-ups with your doctor once a year to ensure all is well. These check-ups can be conveniently done at the same time as a Pap smear.

How will I know if it is correctly in place?

Multiload® has two fine nylon strings attached to it which, when in place, comes out through the cervix. It is important for you to learn how to feel for the strings of the device yourself to check it is in place.

How do I check the strings?

As the strings are so fine they usually stick together, so you will probably feel only "one" string.

First, wash your hands and get into a squatting position (as you would to insert a tampon) so you can insert one or two fingers deep into your vagina. By reaching right up inside the vagina you will feel the cervix at the far end (which feels like the

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tip of your nose). You should be able to feel the strings coming through the cervix – be careful not to pull on them.

Checking for the strings may sometimes be difficult. If you do have difficulty feeling the strings or if you feel anything unusual such as a hard piece of plastic, you should consult your doctor and **use an alternative method of contraception until the placement of the device has been checked**. You may require an ultrasound to determine the position of the device.

NB: Displacement or expulsion of the device can occur in 2-4 out of 100 insertions. This is more common in younger women and women who have never had children.

How often do I check the strings?

You should check for strings once a week during the first month after insertion, then once a month after each period, as the device will not be effective if not fully within the uterus.

How is the device removed?

Removal of Multiload® is simpler than the insertion and it can be removed at any time in your cycle. In some cases a small amount of local anaesthetic may be used and the removal only takes a few minutes. If you wish to fall pregnant, the IUD should be removed during the first 10 days after the first day of your period. Never attempt to remove the device yourself.

Can I get a new one inserted when I remove the old one?

It is possible to have a new Multiload® inserted immediately after the other one is removed.

Where can I get it from?

Multiload® must be inserted by a trained doctor from a Marie Stopes International centre, a gynaecologist, some GPs or a family planning centre.

How much does it cost?

It is available to those with a current Medicare card from Marie Stopes International for approximately \$85, plus the cost of insertion. With a valid Centrelink card (health care or pension card) the cost is reduced.

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**DON'T FORGET YOUR REGULAR BREAST CHECKS
AND BE SURE TO HAVE A PAP SMEAR EVERY TWO YEARS**