

## **COIL FITTING ADVICE**

Dear Patient,

Your doctor has just given you information about having a coil fitted. Fitting a coil is similar to having a cervical smear but takes a little longer (about 15 minutes) and is a little more uncomfortable.

Here is a summary of some of the main points.

### **Counselling**

Not all of the GPs at the health centre fit coils. It is important to speak to one of the coil fitting GPs before the procedure to discuss it in more detail. The coil will not be fitted at this appointment. Please make an appointment (either at the surgery or a telephone consultation) with Dr Wendy Hall, Dr Jane Pargeter or Dr Isabel Welch.

### **Timing**

The ideal time to have a coil fitted is towards the tail end of a period or in the first few days after a period. This ensures that there is no possibility of an early pregnancy.

However, we are aware that the timing of our coil clinics may not fit with your cycle.

A coil **can** be inserted at any time during your cycle if you have not had sex since your last period. It is **your responsibility** to ensure that there is no risk of you being pregnant.

If you are having an existing **coil changed** then this should be done either just after your period or after at least **7 days** without having sex. This is because sperm can linger in the vaginal canal for up to 7 days. If the doctor is able to remove the old coil but is then unable to insert the new one (which occasionally happens) then you may be at risk of becoming pregnant.

### **Appointment**

When you have spoken to one of the coil fitting GPs they will give your name and contact details to reception. Please ensure that we have the correct contact details. Reception keep a list of patients who require a coil. You will be contacted usually by letter with an appointment. Please ring reception to confirm that you will be able to make the

appointment. This is a 30 minute appointment with the GP and a nurse. **If you do not confirm that you are attending the appointment slot will be offered to someone else.**

### **Chlamydia screening**

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease which a woman may have without having any symptoms. It is Oxfordshire policy that screening for Chlamydia should be discussed and offered to all women before a coil fitting. The group most at risk of Chlamydia is the under 25s and if someone has had more than one partner in the previous 12 months. Chlamydia testing is strongly recommended and is a simple self-test. Please don't be offended if you're asked about your sexual history, this is to reduce your risk of developing pelvic inflammatory disease.

### **Pain relief**

We would recommend taking some paracetamol or ibuprofen (or whichever painkiller helps you with period pains) about an hour before the procedure. Fitting a coil can cause some cramping period pains so this reduces the discomfort.

### **Stress relief**

If possible please arrange childcare for your appointment. This makes it easier for you to relax during the procedure.

Try to have a fairly quiet day after the appointment. Most women will feel fine after a coil fitting but they can sometimes feel a little faint (due to a nerve reflex triggered by passing the coil through the cervix) so this is a sensible precaution.

### **Don't panic**

This may seem rather off-putting but the majority of coil fittings are very straightforward and it is an excellent form of contraception, which is why we recommend it.

You will have an opportunity at the coil fitting appointment to discuss any issues but do phone beforehand if you have any questions or go to:

<http://www.fpa.org.uk/campaigns-we-support/love-life-and-larcs>

Dr Wendy Hall

Dr Jane Pargeter

Dr Isabel Welch

Updated March 2018