**Queens Road Medical Practice – Copper Coil (IUD)**

You have been given this information sheet and consent form because you are considering having a copper coil (or IUD) inserted. If you have any questions at all, please discuss these with the doctor or their PA. The procedure can be carried Dr Yates or Dr du Plessis at Queens Road (Tel: 724184) or at Le Longfrie Surgery (Tel: 264185). The appointment will last approximately 30 minutes with the doctor and a nurse.

The copper coil is a very effective reversible method of contraception. The coil can be fitted as routine contraception and as an emergency contraceptive. It is the most effective method of preventing pregnancy after unprotected intercourse. As with any invasive procedure, there are risks involved which you need to be aware of before you decide to go ahead with the fitting, and information which is important for you to understand.

**Advantages:**

* The copper coil can remain in place for 5 or 10 years, depending on the type of coil that is fitted.
* You do not need to remember to take pills or change patches, and it is effective even if you need antibiotics, are on other medication or have diarrhoea or vomiting.
* If you decide you wish to become pregnant or you do not like the coil, it can be removed very simply in the surgery and your fertility will return to its previous level immediately. For this reason, you need to use condoms for 7 days before removal if you do not wish to become pregnant straight away. 80% of women trying to conceive will do so within a year of having a coil removed, which is the same number as those who have not had one inserted.
* It is suitable for use by the majority of women at any time in their reproductive life.

**Timing:**

* The best time to fit the coil is between day 1-5 of your menstrual cycle (i.e. the day you start your period and up to 4 days afterwards) but it can be fitted up to day 7. This is because the cervix is at its most open at this time, making the procedure easier and more comfortable, and ensures that the contraceptive protection of the device begins immediately.
* Occasionally, if it is fitted after 7 days from the start of your last period, a negative pregnancy test must be demonstrated unless you have not had unprotected sexual intercourse since your last normal period.
* The procedure can be performed at any time during the day, but many women find that later on in the day is preferable so that they can go home and take it easy afterwards. You may experience some period pain and light bleeding but this usually settles within a few weeks.
* The coil can be used as an emergency contraception and is more effective than the morning after pill. It can be fitted up to 5 days after ovulation regardless of the timing of intercourse but needs to be discussed with your GP and then referred to either Dr Yates or Dr du Plessis.

**Points to remember:**

* The charge for the fitting will be a minor operation charge plus a nurse and doctor consultation charge (unless you are having it fitted on the under 21 free contraception service). Your Doctor will discuss the cost of the coil with you.
* If you wish, you can take some Ibuprofen or Paracetamol before you come to your fitting appointment provided you have not had any problems with these medicines previously. They are easily and cheaply available without prescription.
* Please bring a sanitary pad or pantliner with you as you may experience some light vaginal bleeding afterwards.
* You can drive yourself home from the appointment provided you feel well enough; most people do. You are entitled to a chaperone or a friend to accompany you during this procedure. The Practice is happy to provide chaperones from among its members of staff but would appreciate receiving as much notice as possible. Members of staff providing this service are bound by strict rules of confidentiality. No additional charge will be levied by the Practice for providing a chaperone.

**Risks and disadvantages:**

Whilst the risks of having a coil fitted are very small and the chances of an adverse event are very unlikely, it is important that you are aware of them.

* The procedure itself can be uncomfortable or even painful but this is reduced by taking simple painkillers beforehand and with the use of a local anaesthetic gel to numb the cervix. The discomfort doesn’t last long, usually only a few seconds at a time. Your doctor will stop if you ask them to. 50% of women experience no or little pain.
* Occasionally it is not possible to successfully insert a coil in the surgery due to pain, or due to the anatomy of the cervix or womb itself. You may be referred for fitting by a Gynaecologist at the MSG if this is the case.
* There is a very small risk (less than 2 in 1,000) of perforating the womb when the coil is inserted. This would necessitate an ultrasound scan at the hospital and if a hole is found, a small operation may be needed to retrieve the coil if it has gone through the womb. If you have pain, which is not controlled by Ibuprofen and Paracetamol, or bleeding which is increasingly heavy (more than a normal period) after having a coil fitted, please seek help.
* If you have a sexually transmitted infection (STI) when your coil is fitted or develop one later on after the fitting, there is a risk of the infection being carried higher up into the pelvis and making you ill or affecting your future fertility if it remains untreated. For this reason, swabs will be recommended before fitting (although sometimes they may be taken on the day) and antibiotics as a one-off dose may be given at the time your coil is inserted. If after insertion you have any signs of infection, such as persisting pelvic pain or abnormal vaginal discharge or odour, please consult your doctor as soon as possible so any infection can be identified and treated. Unexplained fever or feeling generally unwell can also be a sign of an STI.
* Ovarian cysts can occasionally form which may cause pain. They usually go away on their own without treatment.
* It is extremely unlikely that you would become pregnant with a coil in place, but if you did, there is a higher chance of the pregnancy being ectopic. That is, developing outside the womb. This usually requires an operation and the pregnancy is also at greater risk of miscarrying.
* It is quite common to have irregular spotting or bleeding from the vagina for a while after the coil is fitted, but usually this will settle down completely within 3 months. It is worth persevering during this time. The copper coil can lead to heavier, longer and more painful periods in some women. This is an effect of the copper on the womb.
* Occasionally if you have a very heavy bleed when the coil is fitted or afterwards, it can be expelled (1 in 20 chance). This is why we ask you to come back after 6 weeks so we can check it is still there. If you think your coil may have come out it is important you see a doctor as soon as possible if you are sexually active. You may need emergency contraception if you have had intercourse in the previous 7 days.
* Sometimes your partner may complain that they can feel the ends of the threads of your coil when you are having intercourse. If this happens, the threads can be easily trimmed. Usually they are left long so they will tuck up and out of the way.

**If you are happy that you understand the procedure and have no further questions, please sign this form in the space provided below and bring it with you to your appointment.**

Name:................................................................................................. Date of Birth:.......................................

I fully understand the information given above and overleaf and accept the risks as explained. I consent to having a Copper Coil fitted.

Signed:..................................................................................................Date:....................................................

**For use by doctor:**

Device B/N:............................................................................................Expiry:.................................................

Date inserted:.........................................................................................Date due for change:..........................

Signed: ..................................................................................................Doctor:................................................