

# GP Open Access Clinic for the Insertion of Mirena



## Information for Patients

The “GP Coil Clinic” is a new project between the Rotunda Hospital and the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP). Our aim is to offer assessment of and treatment for heavy periods and an IUD (“Coil”) insertion/removal service through a special clinic staffed by General Practitioners who have experience and a particular interest in gynaecological health. This clinic will be supervised by a Consultant Gynaecologist and the patients attending this clinic will have access; where necessary, to hospital investigations (ultrasound scans, blood tests, etc.)

## When You Come for Your Appointment

You should have already been seen by your own GP who will have taken your information and discussed the procedure with you. They will have done a womb examination. If you are having an IUD inserted, your own GP and you will have decided *which* device you want (Mirena, Kyleena, Jaydess or one the Copper coil devices) and your doctor will give you a prescription for that device. You must buy or collect the device before your appointment. We do not supply the IUCDs.

The IUD removals and insertions in this clinic can only be done for women who have **NOT HAD SEX for the previous 3 WEEKS**. Alternatively, if a woman is using a reliable hormonal contraceptive we can do an IUCD removal or

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insertion at any time. Your own GP can offer to put you on temporary hormonal contraception before your appointment if you request this.

So, remember... on the evening of your appointment:

**BRING YOUR OWN COIL** (if you are coming for an insertion)

and

**DO NOT HAVE SEX FOR THE 3 WEEKS PRIOR** to the appointment  
(unless you are on a hormone contraceptive)

### Insertion Procedure

A coil or IUCD is worn inside the womb. They are excellent contraceptives and one of them (the Mirena) can help lighten heavy periods. During the insertion, the doctor will first examine you internally to make sure your womb is healthy. A device called a 'speculum' is inserted into the vagina (the same device that is used when you are having a smear test done) so the doctor can see the cervix. The cervix is cleaned and the IUCD is passed gently through the narrow opening of the cervix which leads up and into the womb.

The entire process generally takes a minute or two and is usually only mildly uncomfortable (women typically get a brief period-type cramp). Occasionally the insertion is more complicated and can be more uncomfortable, but we can stop at any time you request.

### Mirena IUCDs and Heavy Periods

Many women in their 30s and 40s experience heavy menstrual bleeding. While there are many possible causes for this, the vast majority of ladies are found to have no underlying disease and often improve with the insertion of a Mirena IUCD. The clinic aims to offer women the insertion of a Mirena device (where

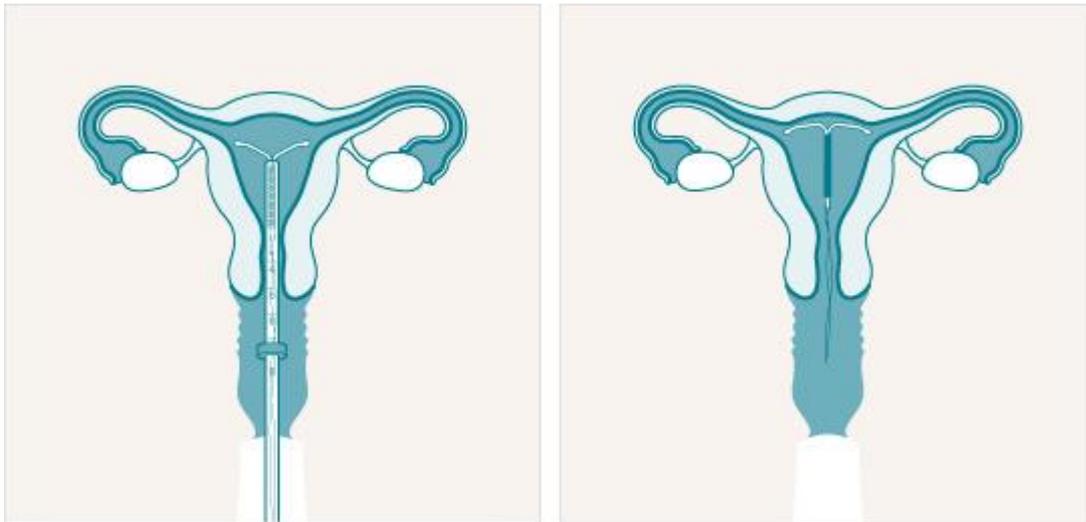
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suitable) and thereby possibly avoiding the need for more invasive investigations and procedures.

The Mirena releases a small amount of a hormone called *levonorgestrel* which is one of the female hormones found in contraceptive pills. This hormone protects against pregnancy very effectively but can also improve heavy, painful periods.

The Mirena IUCD hormone eventually causes your womb lining (endometrium) to become very thin which in turn will usually cause a significant decrease in the amount of blood you lose during your period. In fact, some women will find that their periods stop altogether; although this might take several months to achieve. Occasionally a woman may have heavier, more frequent bleeding for a few weeks after the Mirena first goes in, but this can be controlled with medication if necessary.

“Turning off” your period with a Mirena IUD is a healthy, safe and reversible situation. When you remove the device your period will return to its original heaviness quite quickly.



The insertion procedure takes place in the **National Maternity Hospital Outpatients Clinic**.

### Possible Complications

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- INSERTION MAY CAUSE PAIN, DIZZINESS OR FEELING FAINT AND; RARELY, PERFORATION THROUGH THE WALL OF THE WOMB
- WHILE VERY EFFECTIVE, AN IUCD MAY NOT BE 100 % SAFE AGAINST PREGNANCY (RISK 1/1000). IN THE EVENT OF A **FAILURE**, THE POSSIBILITY OF AN **ECTOPIC** PREGNANCY IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER THAN USUAL.
- THE IUCD CAN BE **EXPELLED** FROM THE WOMB
- THE IUCD CAN **MIGRATE** BEYOND THE WOMB
- THE HORMONE IUCDs CAN CAUSE SOME HORMONAL SIDE EFFECTS SUCH AS **ACNE, BLOATING, MOOD CHANGES**
- THE IUCDs MAY CAUSE YOUR **PERIODS TO CHANGE.**

YOUR PERIOD SHOULD BECOME LIGHTER WITH HORMONE IUCDs OR DISAPPEAR ALTOGETHER (WITH A MIRENA), BUT THE BLEEDING MAY BE SOMEWHAT HEAVIER OR PROLONGED PARTICULARLY IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS AFTER THE MIRENA IS INSERTED. COPPER IUCDs USUALLY MAKE PERIODS SLIGHTLY LONGER AND HEAVIER BUT NOT MORE PAINFUL.