

## Getting Started With Your **Copper T IUD** (ParaGard)

### ★ **What do I need to know about the Copper T IUD?**

- ✓ A few important things to know about the Copper T IUD:
  - You need to see a health provider for insertion and removal of the IUD.
  - It works for 10 years. After 10 years, it should be removed (and you can have a new one placed if desired).

### ★ **What can I expect now that I have a Copper T IUD?**

- ✓ **In the first 1- 5 days:** Some women have some cramps, pain, and bleeding after getting an IUD and some women have no symptoms at all. If you are having cramping: apply a hot pad or warm water bottle over you lower abdomen, and (if OK for you to take) use Ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours as needed. It is OK to wear pads or tampons if you are having bleeding.

*Please call us immediately if you have:*

*•fever or chills •severe abdominal pain •severe cramping and/or increasing bleeding*

*There is a very small increased risk of pelvic infection during the first 21 days (3 weeks) of receiving an IUD, so it is important to stay aware of these precautions during this time. There is also a very small risk of uterine perforation (the IUD going into the wall of the uterus), and failure of the IUD resulting in a pregnancy which could be in your tubes (ectopic). These are very rare complications but it is important for you to contact your clinic with any concerning problems.*

- ✓ **Over the next few months and years:** You may notice that your periods are heavier or you have more cramping than before. This is an expected side effect with the Copper T IUD. It can be helped by using an over-the-counter pain medicine (like Ibuprofen) during your period; this will usually get better after the first few months of having the IUD. Let your health provider know if you have concerns.

### ★ **What about “the strings”?**

- ✓ There are very small and thin strings or threads that are attached to the IUD. These threads sit at the very top of the vagina and can difficult for you to feel. The best way to check that the IUD is in place is to feel for these strings each month, and even before having sexual intercourse. If you are able to feel for the strings, then this will be a great way for you to check that the IUD is positioned correctly. If you cannot feel the strings, this may be OK, but we need to discuss it at your follow-up appointment.

### ★ **When is it safe to have sex? Will the IUD interfere with sex?**

- ✓ Wait until 5 days after the IUD is inserted to have unprotected sex. The IUD will then be very effective in preventing pregnancy.
- ✓ Neither you nor your partner should be able to feel the IUD. Call your health provider if you have any concerns.
- ✓ **The IUD does not protect against STDs; use condoms to prevent STDs including HIV.**

### ★ **When do I need to have the IUD removed?**

- ✓ The Copper T IUD is very effective for the full 10 years of its use.
- ✓ Your IUD needs to be removed (and it can be replaced with a new one) in 10 years, or \_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_.
- ✓ As soon as the IUD is removed, your fertility (your ability to get pregnant) will return. If you are not planning a pregnancy it is important that you continue to use birth control. If you are planning a pregnancy, it is important to take Folic Acid 800 mcg or a Prenatal Vitamin for the 3 months before the IUD is removed.