



The copper chain

What does a copper chain look like?

The copper chain consists of copper tubes strung on a nylon thread. The individual tubes are each 5 mm long and about 1 mm wide. When it is inserted into the uterus, the copper chain is attached to the uterine wall by a small wire.

How does the copper chain work?

Small amounts of copper (copper ions) are released into the uterus from the tubes of the copper chain. Ovulation still occurs, but the copper prevents pregnancy in three ways.

First, the mucus in the cervix changes so that sperm have a harder time getting into the uterus.

Secondly, the sperm's mobility and ability to fertilize are restricted.

Thirdly, the copper changes the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg cannot implant.

The contraceptive effect begins immediately after insertion and lasts for five to 10 years, depending on the model.

The copper chain can adapt to the shape of the uterus. Therefore, it can also be an option for women whose uterine cavity is deformed and a copper IUD does not fit.

How safe is the copper chain?

Statistically, in the first year after insertion, 1 to 5 of 1,000 women who use the copper chain will become pregnant.

How long does the contraceptive protection with a copper chain last?

The copper chain is effective immediately after insertion. It can remain in the uterus for five to ten years depending on the size of the model.



How is the copper chain inserted?

The copper chain is inserted in a gynecological clinic. The insertion requires specialized medical training. Therefore, you can check online to find doctors in your area who have the necessary expertise.

Before insertion, a gynecological examination is carried out, including an ultrasound of the pelvis and a cervical swab. A possible pregnancy, pelvic diseases, and sexually transmitted infections must also be ruled out. Additionally, the size of the uterus must be measured beforehand to determine if a copper chain can be placed.

It is optimal to insert the copper chain during menstruation, but this is not mandatory. In principle, a copper chain can also be used by young women.

A follow-up examination should take place four weeks after the insertion or at the latest after the next menstruation. After that, a check-up should be done every six months.

When can I have a copper chain inserted after childbirth?

After giving birth, an IUD should not be inserted after eight weeks, and after a C-section, it should be inserted no sooner than 12 to 16 weeks. This is to reduce the risk of perforation or expulsion.

How is the copper chain being removed?

The copper chain is being removed by gently pulling and twisting the retrieval threads after an ultrasound check. After removal, fertility returns immediately.

If you wish to continue using an IUD for contraception, a new IUD can be inserted at the same occasion.

How can I check if the copper chain is still in place?

You can feel for the retrieval threads to check if the copper chain is still in place. If you cannot feel the threads during self-examination or if you



feel the IUD itself in addition to the threads, please consult your doctor immediately. It is likely that the copper chain is no longer correctly positioned in the uterus, which increases the likelihood of pregnancy.

If you have any doubts about the correct position of the copper chain, please contact your doctor.

An ultrasound examination should also be performed if the copper chain suddenly causes discomfort.

Possible complications and precautions

You should see your doctor immediately if:

- You cannot feel the retrieval cords of the IUD
- You or your partner can feel the bottom of the IUD
- You think you are pregnant
- You have abdominal pain, fever or smelling discharge
- You or your partner experience pain or discomfort during intercourse
- Your period starts late. Please then take a pregnancy test.
- the IUD is to be removed and/or you want to become pregnant.

There have been isolated reports of IUD expulsion in women who use a menstrual cup. There is a possibility of suction, which can affect the IUD if the menstrual cup is not removed correctly. Please ask your doctor about the correct use of the menstrual cup. Tampons can still be used.

If you have severe period pain or heavy bleeding, we should talk about choosing a copper IUD. A copper IUD might worsen the symptoms.

Interactions

Previous experience with copper IUDs shows that, in general, it is highly unlikely that other medications will affect the contraceptive effect. However, published reports indicate reduced effectiveness with long-term use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (particularly Acetylsalicylic acid (Aspirin ®, Ibuprofen, etc.) and corticosteroids (cortisone). Short-term use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs do not appear to affect contraceptive effectiveness. Let's talk about it.