Where can I learn more about Natural Family Planning?

- Billings Ovulation Method Assn. (USA)
  (651) 699-8139  www.boma-usa.org
- The Couple to Couple League
  (800) 745-8252  www.ccli.org
- Family of the Americas Foundation
  (800) 443-3395  www.familyplanning.net
- FertilityCare Centers of America
  (402) 390-6600, ext. 117  www.fertilitycare.org
- Marquette University Institute for NFP
  (414) 288-3854  www.mu.edu/nursing/NFP
- Natural Family Planning International
  (740) 457-9663  www.nfpandmore.org
- Northwest Family Services
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- One More Soul
  (800) 307-7685  www.onemoresoul.com

PIUD

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<td>100+</td>
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(800) 307-7685  www.onemoresoul.com

1846 North Main Street
Dayton, Ohio 45405-3832

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by Lili Cote de Bejarano, MD, MPH
**What is an IUD?**

An Intrauterine Device (IUD) is a small object that is placed inside a woman’s uterus (womb) for the purpose of preventing or interrupting pregnancy. IUDs are considered to be long acting reversible methods of contraception (LARC).  

Currently, there are two kinds of IUDs available in the United States: the Copper-T IUD, made from plastic and copper, and the levonorgestrel intrauterine system (IUS), a plastic device that releases hormones.

**Is an IUD 100% effective?**

No. The copper-T IUD has a clinical pregnancy rate of 0.8 per 100 women each year, and the IUS has a rate of 0.2 per 100 women each year.  

**How does an IUD work?**

IUDs work against pregnancy in several ways. Some of these effects take place before fertilization, and others take place after the sperm and egg have united to form a new human being.

Both the copper-T and the IUS irritate the inner lining of the womb, causing inflammation. This is the same reaction the body has to any foreign object, such as a splinter under the skin. In the reproductive system, inflammation causes some cells to attack and destroy sperm, ova, and any newly formed embryo.

The copper-T IUD also releases copper continuously into the inside of the womb, and the copper spreads into the part of the Fallopian tubes near the womb. This copper can directly poison the ovum or the sperm. If fertilization occurs, the copper can also poison the embryo while it is still in the Fallopian tube, thus causing destruction of a new human life.

The IUS releases a synthetic hormone (progestin) that has several effects in the female reproductive system. In each normal cycle, the womb builds up tissue and chemicals that help with sperm survival and movement and also support implantation (the process by which a new embryo attaches to the womb to obtain nourishment to sustain life). The hormones released by the IUS (a) make the lining of the womb thinner so that sperm do not survive or move as well and, if fertilization occurs, the new embryo usually cannot implant in the mother’s womb, (b) can thicken the cervical mucus, reducing sperm movement and vitality, and (c) cause a small reduction in ovulation (about 15%). The new IUS with lower doses of progestin are unable to stop ovulation.

**Do the IUD and IUS cause abortion?**

Using mathematical models, it has been estimated that a woman using the IUD will have from about 0.2 to 1.8 abortions (destruction of a new human life) per year caused specifically by the IUD/IUS.

**Does an IUD have a permanent effect on a woman’s fertility?**

The synthetic hormone in the IUS can cause a delay in the return of menstruation and fertility after it is removed.

If perforation or pelvic infection occurs while using the IUD, the uterus or Fallopian tubes may become damaged, thus reducing the possibility of pregnancy.

In cases of perforation of the uterus, a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) may be required, resulting in permanent sterility.

**What are my options?**

If you are single, abstinence is the best option and always works!

If you are married, the modern methods of Natural Family Planning (NFP) are the safest, healthiest, and least expensive approaches to family planning.