

## What about side effects?

The level of hormone in the woman's blood stream is very low, so that the side effects such as breast tenderness, headaches or acne are rare. If they do occur, they usually settle after the first few months.

## How often should I see my doctor?

This can vary but it is usual to have the system checked 6 weeks after it is fitted, and once a year thereafter. Your doctor will advise when best to return for a checkup.

## How do I get Mirena fitted?

Specially trained healthcare providers can fit a Mirena. Ask your doctor if they can fit it for you or refer you to another doctor who can fit it.

## How long does it take to fit?

Preparation for the fitting can take up to 5-10 minutes, but the actual fitting of the system only takes a few seconds.

## Does the fitting hurt?

If you are worried about possible pain during insertion and would like pain relief before Mirena is inserted, ask your healthcare provider for advice and preventative pain-relieving treatment. Afterwards you may feel some cramping, like period pain. This usually disappears after a few hours.

## What if I want to have a baby?

If you want to become pregnant ask your doctor to remove the system. Your usual level of fertility will return very quickly after Mirena is removed. Some women have become pregnant in the first month after removal.

## Where can I get more information?

We hope this brochure was helpful.

If you had additional questions please ask your healthcare professional or visit [www.medicines.ie](http://www.medicines.ie)

**For further information on contraception options please visit [www.mycontraception.ie](http://www.mycontraception.ie)**

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## Mirena Patient Information

For use only with patients who have been prescribed Mirena

 **Mirena**<sup>®</sup>  
52 mg Intrauterine Delivery System  
Levonorgestrel



## What is Mirena®

Mirena is an intrauterine system (IUS), which is placed into the womb by a trained healthcare provider. It is a soft, flexible plastic T-shaped frame containing the hormone levonorgestrel (a type of progestogen) which is slowly released into the womb. Mirena can be used as a contraceptive for up to 8 years.

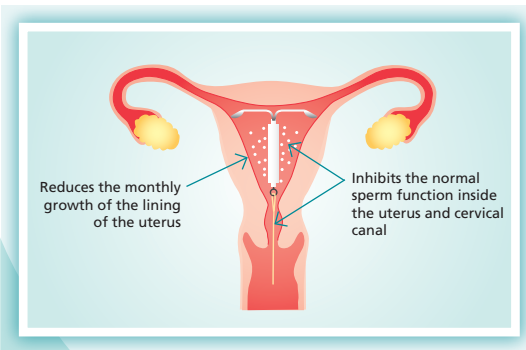
Mirena is an effective treatment for heavy menstrual bleeding (HMB) whilst also providing effective contraception protection. Mirena can be used for the treatment of heavy menstrual bleeding for up to 5 years. If symptoms have not returned after 5 years of use, continued use may be considered. Your Mirena should be removed or replaced after a maximum of 8 years.

Mirena can also be used as the progestogen component of hormone replacement therapy for up to 5 years.

## How does it work as a contraceptive?

Mirena works in a number of ways:

- It thickens the mucus in your cervix (the lower part of your womb), which helps to stop sperm reaching the egg
- It stops normal sperm function inside the womb and the ovarian tubes, helping to prevent the sperm and egg from coming into contact.
- It reduces the monthly thickening of the lining of the womb therefore making periods lighter and shorter



## What is Heavy Menstrual Bleeding (HMB)?

HMB is defined as excessively heavy or prolonged menstrual bleeding (periods). The average amount of blood loss during a normal menstrual period is 40 to 50 ml. With HMB, a woman may lose 80 ml or more.

HMB may be caused by medical problems or hormone imbalances. In a normal menstrual cycle, there is a balance between estrogen and progesterone. These hormones regulate the monthly build-up of the lining of the womb, which is shed each month during menstruation. HMB can occur because of an imbalance between estrogen and progesterone. As a result of the imbalance, the lining of the womb keeps building up. When it is eventually shed, there is heavy bleeding.

Because hormone imbalances are often present in adolescents and in women approaching menopause, this type of HMB is fairly common in these groups. Another common cause of HMB is the presence of fibroids in the womb.

## How does Mirena treat Heavy Menstrual Bleeding (HMB)?

Mirena releases a small amount of hormone into the womb. This hormone has the effect of reducing the monthly buildup of the lining of the womb (the endometrium). This means that there is then very little lining to be shed away in the monthly period. The result is that the user experiences shorter and lighter periods.

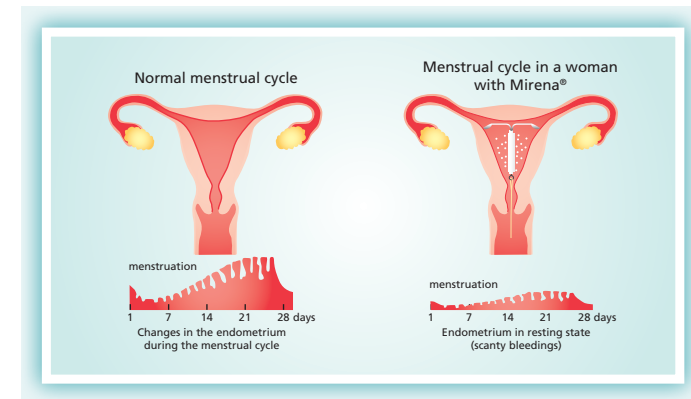
- Studies show that after 3 months use, the average blood loss is reduced by about 86%, and by 12 months the flow is reduced by 97% every cycle.<sup>1</sup>
- About one fifth of women using Mirena will not have any periods at all.<sup>2</sup>

Women may find this unusual but can be reassured that there is no "buildup" of blood, because the hormone in Mirena prevents the lining of the womb from building up at all. Often it is the excessive thickening of this lining that is the cause of the problems in the first place.

## What happens to my periods when I use Mirena?

Many women have spotting (a small amount of blood loss) or light bleeding in addition to their periods for the first 3-6 months after the Mirena is fitted. Overall, you are likely to find that after the first few months your periods will become much lighter than usual. Some women may find that their periods stop altogether. Most women notice they have shorter and lighter bleeds.

Your own hormone levels remain the same and you will find that your periods return to normal after Mirena is removed. Not having periods or reduced blood loss can be an advantage to women's health.



## Is it safe to use tampons when Mirena is fitted?

Some women find that because their periods are so much lighter after the initial few months, that panty liners provide adequate protection. If tampons are used, you should change them with extra care, so as not to pull the strings of Mirena.