

# LARC: Quick Facts

## What is long-acting reversible contraception (LARC)?

**LARC** is a term for highly effective and easy-to-use forms of birth control that last for years at a time. LARC includes the **IUD** (intrauterine device) and the contraceptive **implant**.

## How do I get a LARC?

You must have a medical provider insert the IUD or implant during a short outpatient visit.

## How long will my LARC protect me from getting pregnant?

It depends on the type of LARC you choose:

- The non-hormonal copper IUD (**Paragard®**) can be used for up to 12 years.
- The hormonal IUD (**Mirena®**, **Liletta®**, **Kyleena®**) can be used for up to 5 years.
- The hormonal IUD (**Skyla®**) can be used for up to 3 years.
- The implant (**Nexplanon®**) can be used for up to 3 years.

Once your provider inserts the LARC, you do not have to do anything before sex for it to prevent pregnancy. It may be removed at any time by a medical provider. LARC does not prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Condoms should be used to protect against STIs.

## How does LARC work?

**IUDs** work mainly by preventing sperm from fertilizing the egg. The **implant** works mainly by stopping the ovaries from releasing an egg.

## What are the potential side effects of LARC?

The most common side effect of LARC is irregular menstrual bleeding. With the implant and the hormonal IUD, many women may experience a lighter period or no period at all. With the copper IUD, some women may experience a heavier period and increased menstrual cramps. If you do experience any potential side effects, it is important to talk to your health care provider.

## If I choose to, will I be able to get pregnant after the LARC is removed?

Yes, you will return to your normal fertility once your medical provider removes the LARC.

## Why should I choose LARC over other forms of birth control?

LARC is much more effective at preventing pregnancy than other forms of birth control because there is little room for error. Once your medical provider has placed the LARC, you will have continuous birth control for years, until it is time to get a new one or you choose to have it taken out.

These are only quick facts. You can learn more about LARC by talking to a provider and/or visiting [www.Bedsider.org](http://www.Bedsider.org).

Greater Rochester LARC Initiative  
The Hoekelman Center  
Department of Pediatrics, URM  
Phone: (585) 276-6234  
[LARC.urmc.edu](http://LARC.urmc.edu)