

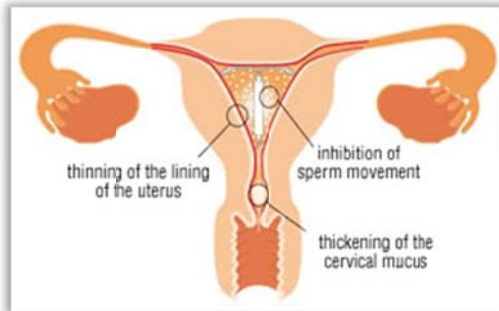


## IUDs: Facts over Fear

Pervasive advertisements about lawsuits are giving many women the impression that IUDs are dangerous, despite scientific evidence to the contrary. The ads tout “serious injuries” that are “linked to” hormonal IUDs, highlighting rare side effects such as uterine perforation, migration of the device from the uterus, and tubal pregnancy. For women unfamiliar with medical terms and risk profiles, these complications may seem more serious and frequent than they are in reality. And, of course, any discussion of the benefits of effective, long-acting contraception is somehow missing from these advertisements.

IUDs are the most effective,  
reversible contraceptive

To help put these ads in perspective may I suggest an excellent online resource that clearly communicates the facts about hormonal IUDs, “[Those Mirena lawsuit ads: Fact & Fiction](#)”, at a new contraceptive support website [Bedsider.org](#). It explains about rare complications like uterine perforation which occurs in less than 1 per 2,000 IUD insertions. It also addresses the fear of IUD migration, a complication so rare that even though tens of millions of women use IUDs worldwide, we in the medical community can’t estimate how rare it occurs.



The Mirena IUD has been available in the United States since 2001. Unlike the pill or pregnancy, there is no risk of blood clots in the legs or lungs with IUDs. An annual pregnancy rate of less than 1% makes it is the most effective, reversible contraceptive available (Contrast 5% of birth contraceptive pill and 15% of condom users get pregnant each year). IUDs are user friendly since there is nothing a woman must remember to do other than replace it after 5 years of use (perfect for forgetful teens and busy moms). While some Mirena IUD users do experience an

initial transition of irregular, spotting; most women then enjoy years of lighter menstrual periods (about 20% don’t menstruate which isn’t harmful since the IUD prevents tissue build up). Finally, while an IUD costs approximately \$800 and is covered by most health plans, if this cost is spread out over its lifespan, it is less expensive (about \$13 per month) than many birth contraceptive pills.

Putting real risks in perspective, an unplanned pregnancy is the greatest risk of avoiding responsible use of contraception which too often occurs because of misconceptions. Let’s counter this by shedding light on the favorable facts about birth control.

*Wishing you good health!*

Scott Kramer MD, FACOG, FACS

PS: Comprehensive contraceptive benefits (usually at no cost) are included in the “Affordable Care Act” and consequently by “[Covered California](#)” health plans.

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