

Checklist for Screening Clients Who Want to Initiate Use of the Copper IUCD

Research findings over the past 25 years have established that intrauterine contraceptive devices (IUCDs) are safe and effective for use by most women, including those who have not given birth, who want to space births, and those living with or at risk of HIV infection. For some women, IUCDs are not recommended because of the presence of certain medical conditions, such as genital cancer and current cervical infection. For these reasons, women who desire to use an IUCD must be screened for certain medical conditions to determine if they are appropriate candidates for the IUCD.



The Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Division of Reproductive Health (DRH), in collaboration with Family Health International (FHI), has developed this simple checklist (see center spread) to help health care providers screen clients who were counseled about contraceptive options and made an informed decision to use an IUCD. This checklist is a revised version of the *Checklist for Screening Clients Who Want to Initiate Use of the Copper IUCD* produced in 2007. Changes reflected in this version are based on the recently revised recommendations of the *Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use, 4th edition* (WHO, 2009) as advised by research over the past several years, and the *National Family Planning Guidelines for Service Providers* (DRH, 2010). It consists of a list of 21 questions designed to identify medical conditions and high-risk behaviors that would prevent safe IUCD use or require further evaluation. Clients who are ruled out because of their response to some of the medical eligibility questions may still be good candidates for an IUCD if the suspected condition can be excluded through appropriate evaluation.

A health care provider should complete the checklist before inserting an IUCD. In some settings the responsibility for completing the checklist may be shared — by a counselor who completes questions 1–14, and an appropriately trained health care provider who determines the answers to the remaining questions during the pelvic exam. Providers trained to perform insertions may include nurses, nurse-midwives, nurse-practitioners, midwives, physicians, and, depending on educational and professional standards in each country, physician’s assistants and associates.

This checklist is part of a series of provider checklists for reproductive health services. The other checklists include the *Checklist for Screening Clients Who Want to Initiate Combined Oral Contraceptives*, the *Checklist for Screening Clients Who Want to Initiate DMPA (or NET-EN)*, the *Checklist for Screening Clients Who Want to Initiate Contraceptive Implants*, and the *Checklist on How to be Reasonably Sure a Client is Not Pregnant*. For more information about the provider checklists, please visit Kenya Ministry of Health and Sanitation, DRH Web site at www.drh.go.ke.

Determining Current Pregnancy

Questions 1–6 are intended to help a provider determine, with reasonable certainty, whether a client is not pregnant. If a client answers “yes” to any of these questions and there are no signs or symptoms of pregnancy, it is highly likely that she is not pregnant. An IUCD should never be inserted in a woman who is pregnant, as it may result in a septic miscarriage. However, if a client answers “yes” to question 1, IUCD insertion should be delayed until four weeks postpartum. There is an increased risk of perforating the uterus when IUCDs are inserted after 48 hours and up to four weeks postpartum. However, IUCDs can be inserted by a trained professional within the first 48 hours after the client has given birth.

Assessing Medical Eligibility for the IUCD

7. Do you have bleeding between menstrual periods that is unusual for you, or bleeding after intercourse (sex)?

Unexplained vaginal bleeding may be a sign of an underlying pathological condition, such as genital malignancy (cancer) or infection. All these possibilities must be ruled out before an IUCD can be inserted. If necessary, refer the client to a higher-level provider or specialist for evaluation and diagnosis. Counsel the client about other contraceptive options available, and provide condoms to use in the meantime.

8. Have you been told that you have any type of cancer in your genital organs, trophoblastic disease, or pelvic tuberculosis?

There is a concern about the increased risk of infection, perforation, and bleeding at insertion in clients with genital cancer. Clients with trophoblastic disease may require multiple uterine curettages, and an IUCD is unwise in this situation. There is also an increased risk of perforation. Clients with known pelvic tuberculosis may have a higher risk of secondary infection and bleeding if an IUCD is inserted. If a woman has any one of these three conditions, she should not have an IUCD inserted. Counsel her about other contraceptive options available, and provide condoms to use in the meantime.

9. Have you ever been told that you have a rheumatic disease, such as lupus?

This question is intended to identify women who have been diagnosed with systemic lupus disease with severe thrombocytopenia. Women with severe thrombocytopenia have an increased risk of bleeding and should not initiate use of an IUCD.



Note: Questions 10–13 are intended to identify clients at high individual risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), because there is a possibility that they may currently have chlamydia and/or gonorrhea infection. Unless these STIs can be reliably ruled out, clients at high risk are not good candidates for IUCD insertion. IUCD insertion may increase risk of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in these clients. They should be counseled about other contraceptive options and provided with condoms for STI protection. However, if other contraceptive methods are not available or acceptable, and there are no signs of STI, an IUCD still can be inserted. Careful follow-up is required in such cases.

10. Within the last 3 months, have you had more than one sexual partner?

Clients who have multiple sexual partners are at high risk of contracting STIs. Unless chlamydia and/or gonorrhea infection can be reliably ruled out, these clients are not good candidates for IUCD insertion. (See note regarding questions 10–13).

11. Within the last 3 months, do you think your partner has had another sexual partner?

Clients whose partners have more than one sexual partner are at high risk of contracting STIs. Unless chlamydia and/or gonorrhea infection can be reliably ruled out, these clients are not good candidates for IUCD insertion. In situations where polygamy is common, the provider should ask about sexual partners outside of the union. (See note regarding questions 10–13).

12. Within the last 3 months, have you been told you have an STI?

There is a possibility that these clients currently have chlamydia and/or gonorrhea infection. Unless these STIs can be reliably ruled out, these clients are not good candidates for IUCD insertion. (See note regarding questions 10–13).

13. Within the last 3 months, has your partner been told that he has an STI, or do you know if he has had any symptoms – for example, penile discharge?

(Note: There are two parts to this question. Answering “yes” to either part or both parts of the question restricts IUCD insertion).

Clients whose partners have STIs may have these infections as well. Unless chlamydia and/or gonorrhea infection can be reliably ruled out, these clients are not good candidates for IUCD insertion. (See note regarding questions 10–13.)

14. Are you HIV-positive, and have you developed AIDS?

If the woman is HIV-positive but has not developed AIDS, the IUCD may generally be used. However, if the woman has developed AIDS, ask whether she is taking ARVs and make sure she is doing clinically well. If she is doing clinically well, she may be a candidate for the IUCD. If she is not, an IUCD usually is not recommended unless other more appropriate methods are not available or not acceptable. There is concern that HIV-positive clients who have developed AIDS and are not taking ARVs may be at increased risk of STIs and PID because of a suppressed immune system. IUCD use may further increase that risk.

Pelvic Examination

15. Is there any type of ulcer on the vulva, vagina, or cervix?

Genital ulcers or lesions may indicate a current STI. While an ulcerative STI is not a contraindication for IUCD insertion, it indicates that the woman is at high individual risk of STIs, in which case IUCDs are not generally recommended. Diagnosis should be established and treatment provided as needed. An IUCD can still be inserted if co-infection with gonorrhea and chlamydia are reliably ruled out.

16. Does the client feel pain in her lower abdomen when you move the cervix?

Cervical motion tenderness is a sign of PID. Clients with current PID should not use an IUCD. Treatment should be provided as appropriate. If necessary, referral should be made to a higher-level provider or specialist. Counsel the client about condom use and other contraceptives.

17. Is there adnexa tenderness?

Adnexa tenderness and/or adnexa mass is a sign of a malignancy or PID. Clients with genital cancer or PID should not use an IUCD. Diagnosis and treatment should be provided as appropriate. If necessary, referral should be made to a higher-level provider or specialist.

18. Is there purulent cervical discharge?

Purulent cervical discharge is a sign of cervicitis and possibly PID. Clients with current cervicitis or PID should not use an IUCD. Treatment should be provided as appropriate. If necessary, referral should be made to a higher-level provider or specialist. Counsel the client about condom use.

19. Does the cervix bleed easily when touched?

If the cervix bleeds easily at contact, it may indicate that the client has cervicitis or cervical cancer. Clients with current cervicitis or cervical cancer should not have an IUCD inserted. Treatment should be provided as appropriate. If necessary, referral should be made to a higher-level provider or specialist. If, through appropriate additional evaluation beyond the checklist, these conditions may be excluded, then the woman can receive the IUCD.

20. Is there an anatomical abnormality of the uterine cavity that will not allow appropriate IUCD insertion?

If there is an anatomical abnormality that distorts the uterine cavity, proper IUCD placement may not be possible. Cervical stenosis also may preclude an IUCD insertion.

21. Were you unable to determine the size and/or position of the uterus?

Determining size and position of the uterus is essential before IUCD insertion to ensure high fundal placement of the IUCD and to minimize the risk of perforation.

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First, be reasonably sure that the client is not pregnant. If she is not menstruating at the time of her visit, ask the client questions 1–6. As soon as the client answers **YES** to *any question*, stop, and follow the instructions after question 6.

YES	1. Have you had a baby in the last 4 weeks?	NO
YES	2. Did you have a baby less than 6 months ago, are you fully or nearly-fully breastfeeding, and have you had no menstrual period since then?	NO
YES	3. Have you abstained from sexual intercourse since your last menstrual period or delivery?	NO
YES	4. Did your last menstrual period start within the past 12 days?	NO
YES	5. Have you had a miscarriage or abortion in the last 12 days?	NO
YES	6. Have you been using a reliable contraceptive method consistently and correctly?	NO

If the client answered **YES** to *any one of questions 1–6* and she is free of signs or symptoms of pregnancy, you can be reasonably sure that she is not pregnant. Proceed to questions 7–14. However, if she answers **YES** to *question 1*, the insertion should be delayed until 4 weeks after delivery. Ask her to come back at that time.

If the client answered **NO** to *all of questions 1–6*, pregnancy cannot be ruled out. The client should await menses or use a pregnancy test.

To determine if the client is medically eligible to use an IUCD, ask questions 7–14. As soon as the client answers **YES** to *any question*, stop, and follow the instructions after question 14.

NO	7. Do you have bleeding between menstrual periods that is unusual for you, or bleeding after intercourse (sex)?	YES
NO	8. Have you been told that you have any type of cancer in your genital organs, trophoblastic disease, or pelvic tuberculosis?	YES
NO	9. Have you ever been told that you have a rheumatic disease such as lupus?	YES
NO	10. Within the last 3 months, have you had more than one sexual partner?	YES
NO	11. Within the last 3 months, do you think your partner has had another sexual partner?	YES
NO	12. Within the last 3 months, have you been told you have an STI?	YES
NO	13. Within the last 3 months, has your partner been told that he has an STI, or do you know if he has had any symptoms – for example, penile discharge?	YES
NO	14. Are you HIV-positive, and have you developed AIDS?	YES

If the client answered **NO** to *all of questions 7–14*, proceed with the **PELVIC EXAM**.

During the pelvic exam, the provider should determine the answers to questions 15–21.

If the client answered **YES** to *any of questions 7–9*, an IUCD cannot be inserted. Further evaluation of the condition is required.

If the client answered **YES** to *any of questions 10–13*, she is not a good candidate for an IUCD unless chlamydia and/or gonorrhea infection can be reliably ruled out.

If she answered **YES** to the *second part of question 14* and is not currently taking ARV drugs, IUCD insertion is not usually recommended. If she is doing clinically well on ARVs, the IUCD may generally be inserted. HIV-positive women without AIDS also generally can initiate IUCD use.

NO	15. Is there any type of ulcer on the vulva, vagina, or cervix?	YES
NO	16. Does the client feel pain in her lower abdomen when you move the cervix?	YES
NO	17. Is there adnexa tenderness?	YES
NO	18. Is there purulent cervical discharge?	YES
NO	19. Does the cervix bleed easily when touched?	YES
NO	20. Is there an anatomical abnormality of the uterine cavity that will not allow appropriate IUCD insertion?	YES
NO	21. Were you unable to determine the size and/or position of the uterus?	YES

If the answer to *all of questions 15–21* is **NO**, you may insert the IUCD.

If the answer to *any of questions 15–21* is **YES**, the IUCD cannot be inserted without further evaluation. See explanations for more instructions.