

# What can I expect from Levosert<sup>®</sup>?

(levonorgestrel)



# Welcome!

## Why have I been given this guide?

You have been given this guide as you have been prescribed the intrauterine system (IUS), Levosert. This guide contains information on how Levosert can provide you with contraception and/or help with heavy menstrual bleeding (heavy periods).

**This guide does not replace the leaflet that comes in the Levosert pack. The leaflet should be read along with this guide.**



# What is Levosert?



A device that is placed into your uterus and slowly releases a hormone called levonorgestrel



Used to prevent pregnancy



May lighten heavy periods



It can stay in place for up to 6 years for contraception and heavy menstrual bleeding, but can be removed or replaced earlier if heavy or bothersome menstrual bleeding returns



Is reversible - when removed, it won't affect your fertility

# What are heavy periods?

**Heavy periods are common, with around a third of women in the UK saying they have them.**

Heavy periods are when your periods are consistently heavy or persist for a long period of time. Heavy periods are difficult to precisely define, as blood loss during a period varies from woman to woman. However, a good indication that your periods are heavy is if you:

- need to change your sanitary products every hour for several hours in a row
- pass blood clots larger than 2.5cm (about the size of a 10p coin)
- bleed through to your clothes or bedding
- need to use two types of sanitary product together to prevent leaks – for example, tampons and sanitary pads

**Heavy periods don't always have an underlying cause, but certain conditions such as fibroids or endometriosis can cause them, so it's important to talk to your doctor if you are having any symptoms of heavy periods to rule out any of these conditions.**

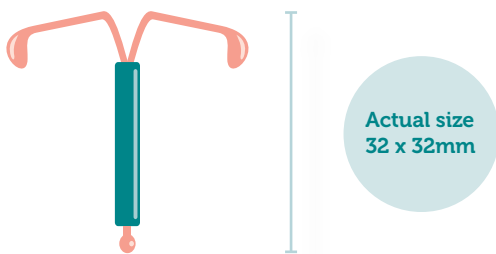


# How does Levosert work?

**Levosert is a device that helps prevent pregnancy and can also be used to lighten heavy periods.**

It is placed into your uterus and works by slowly releasing a hormone called levonorgestrel – this is why it's known as an intrauterine delivery system (IUS).

This small, flexible, T-shaped device is placed into your uterus by a specially trained nurse or doctor and can stay there for up to 6 years for contraception and heavy menstrual bleeding, but can be removed or replaced earlier if heavy or bothersome menstrual bleeding returns.



**Levosert is an effective, long-term and reversible method of contraception**

Levosert prevents pregnancy by:

- Thickening the mucus of the cervix, which prevents sperm from entering your uterus and fertilising an egg
- Thinning the lining of the uterus
- Preventing the release of eggs (ovulation) in some women

**Levosert can also reduce menstrual blood flow, so it can be used if you suffer from heavy periods**

Levosert lightens heavy periods by:

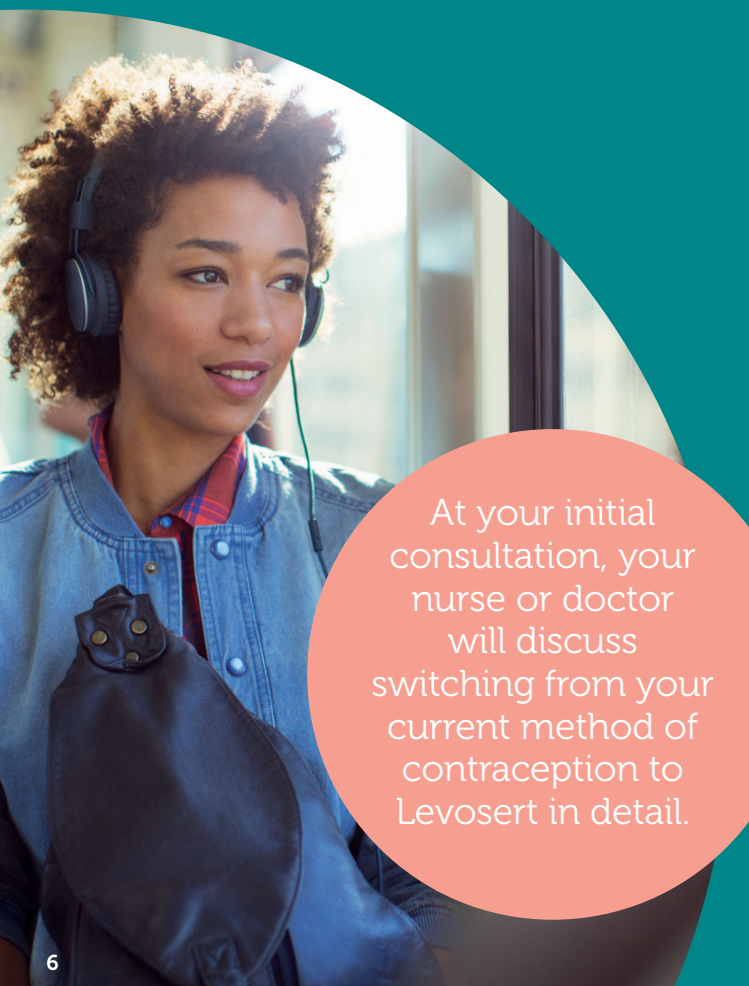
- Reducing the thickness of the uterus lining

# When will I be fitted with Levosert?

After your initial consultation, your nurse or doctor will discuss booking your appointment to fit Levosert.

The ideal time to fit Levosert is during your period or within seven days from the beginning of your period. Ensure pregnancy has been excluded before insertion of Levosert. If you already have a Levosert fitted and it is time to replace it with a new one, you do not need to wait until your period.

If you are using other forms of contraception, when you can switch to Levosert depends on the method of contraception being used.



At your initial consultation, your nurse or doctor will discuss switching from your current method of contraception to Levosert in detail.



## Current contraceptive

## What you should do



### Combined pill or progestogen-only pill

- Continue to take the pill up until the day you are fitted with Levosert
- Depending on the type of pill, your nurse or doctor will advise if additional contraceptive precautions are needed



### Contraceptive injection

- If your injection was administered more than 14 weeks ago, you will need to use an additional form of contraception for 7 days after Levosert is fitted



### Contraceptive implant

- If your implant was fitted more than 3 years ago, you will need to use an additional form of contraception for 7 days after Levosert is fitted



### Contraceptive patch

- Continue to wear a patch up until the day you are fitted with Levosert



### Copper coil

- You will need to use an extra form of contraception for 7 days before and 7 days after being fitted with Levosert

# How can I prepare for my Levosert fitting appointment?

**There are a few things you can do to make your fitting as comfortable as possible:**



- Eat a full meal before the fitting – some women feel faint after Levosert has been fitted and a full stomach may help to prevent this



- Bring a sanitary towel or panty liner with you in case there is a little bleeding afterwards – some bleeding after the fitting is common



- Arrange time to rest for remainder of the day

**You may experience some pain following the insertion of Levosert. Your nurse or doctor will be familiar with this so discuss appropriate pain relief with them before your fitting**





# What will happen at my Levosert fitting appointment?

## The fitting of Levosert only takes around 5 minutes...

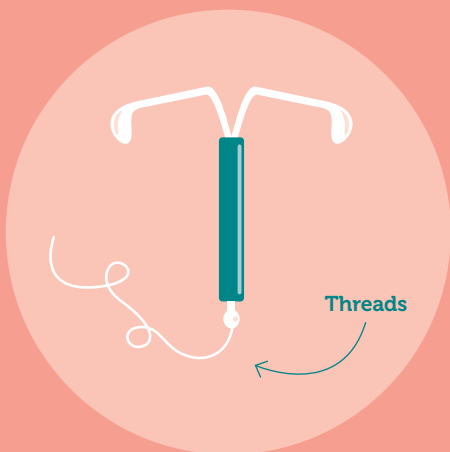
...but you will need to allow up to an hour for the appointment so that the doctor or nurse can talk you through everything.

At the start of your appointment, you will have the opportunity to ask any questions, so you are comfortable to go ahead with the fitting.

The fitting of Levosert is similar to having a smear test. Your nurse or doctor will carry out a short examination and place Levosert into your uterus through the cervix.

It is important to let your nurse or doctor know if you feel any pain or discomfort during your fitting. They will talk you through each stage to ensure the fitting is as comfortable as possible.

After Levosert has been fitted, your nurse or doctor will cut the two threads to the right length and show you how to check that Levosert is still in place by feeling for the threads. This should be done once a month, ideally after your period.



# What can I expect after my Levosert is fitted?

Following the insertion of Levosert, you may experience some pain and discomfort. If you are in a lot of pain or are bleeding heavily after insertion, you should contact your doctor immediately.

Over time, many women find their periods become shorter and lighter, but these effects may vary from person to person. Many women experience spotting for the first 3-6 months after Levosert is fitted. Others experience an increase in bleeding in the first 2-3 months. You will normally have much lighter periods within 3-6 months after Levosert is fitted, and some women may have no periods at all.



Please read the patient information leaflet for more information on potential side effects with Levosert.


**You must see a doctor without delay if you develop any of the following symptoms:**

- Severe pain or fever developing shortly after insertion
- Severe pain and continued bleeding
- Lower abdominal pain especially if you also have a fever or have missed a period or have unexpected bleeding
- Abnormal bleeding
- Painful swelling of your leg
- Sudden chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Mood changes, depressive symptoms or suicidal thoughts

If you have any concerns about irregular bleeding or persistent pain, please contact your nurse or doctor.

# When should I have a check-up?

Your doctor or nurse will advise you if you need to make a follow-up appointment. This is normally 6 weeks after Levosert has been fitted. At this visit, the nurse or doctor will examine you and check that Levosert is still in place by feeling for your threads. You will then need a check-up appointment every 12 months thereafter, until Levosert is removed.



You can check for the threads of your Levosert every month to ensure it is still in place. If you cannot locate your threads, contact your nurse or doctor right away.

# I still have some questions about Levosert

## **How long will my Levosert last?**

Your Levosert will work for up to 6 years for contraception and heavy menstrual bleeding, but can be removed or replaced earlier if heavy or bothersome menstrual bleeding returns. You can stop using Levosert at any point. Just book an appointment to have it removed by your doctor or nurse.

If after 6 years for contraception and heavy menstrual bleeding, you'd like to continue to use Levosert, a new one can be fitted in the same appointment as the old one is removed.

## **When can I resume sexual intercourse after having Levosert fitted?**

You can resume sexual intercourse whenever you feel comfortable. If Levosert is fitted within 7 days of the start of your period, no additional contraception is needed. If it is not fitted during the first 7 days of your period, a barrier method of contraception such as a condom should be used for 7 days. An additional form of contraception may be needed if you switched from a different contraceptive (this is explained on page 7).

## **Can I become pregnant while using Levosert?**

It is very rare for women to become pregnant with Levosert – it's over 99% effective, which means fewer than 1 woman in 100 will become pregnant.

However, in the event that a woman becomes pregnant while using Levosert, there is increased chance that the pregnancy will be ectopic (growing outside the uterus).

## **What if I think I am pregnant?**

Missing a period may not mean that you are pregnant. Some women may not have periods whilst using Levosert.

If you are worried that you may be pregnant and have not had a period for 6 weeks, then consider taking a pregnancy test. If this is negative there is no need to carry out another test, unless you have other signs of pregnancy, e.g. sickness, tiredness or breast tenderness.

If you become pregnant whilst using Levosert, please contact your doctor as soon as possible so that ectopic pregnancy can be excluded and your Levosert can be removed.



### **What if I decide I want to become pregnant?**

Please arrange an appointment to discuss the removal of Levosert with your doctor. Your fertility will quickly return to normal after your Levosert has been removed.

### **Can I use Levosert after I have a baby?**

Yes, you can use Levosert after you've had a baby, but you will need to wait until your uterus has returned to normal. At the earliest, this will be around 6 weeks following delivery.

If you have any questions about reversible contraception following childbirth, talk to your nurse or doctor.

### **Can I breastfeed while using Levosert?**

Very small amounts of the hormone in Levosert can be found in breast milk, but the levels are very low, and lower than with any other hormonal contraceptive method. There is no risk expected to the baby. The risk of perforation is low but is increased in breastfeeding women and in women who have had a baby up to 36 weeks before insertion.

**Please discuss this with your nurse or doctor before starting breastfeeding.**

# What do I need to remember?

- **Talk to your doctor/nurse about how to switch from your current method of contraception to Levosert**
- **Book your fitting appointment ideally either during your period or within seven days from the beginning of your period**
- **Bring sanitary towels to your fitting appointment, just in case there is a little bleeding afterwards**
- **Once your Levosert has been fitted, remember to check your threads every month**
- **Book your check-up appointment for ideally 6 weeks after your Levosert fitting**

**Date of insertion of Levosert:**


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**First check-up:**

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**Your healthcare professional's name:**

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If you experience any side effects, including ones that are not listed in this booklet or the patient information leaflet, speak to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet.

You can also report side effects directly by going to:

**<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>**

By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information about the safety of Levosert.



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