# What is an Intrauterine device (IUD) and heavy menstrual bleeding - video transcript

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (00:02):**

An IUD is an intrauterine device, which is something that is put inside the uterus to help in the prevention of pregnancy. It is a cost-effective, highly effective method of contraception, that is a great set-and-forget option. Once it's in, you don't have to worry about it for the next five to 10 years.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (00:23):**

So an IUD is a fantastic option for women of any age, including young women. You don't necessarily need to have had a baby to have one inserted, and we can insert one for you in clinic, or if you're feeling anxious about the procedure, we have the option of inserting it asleep as well.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (00:42):**

The IUD insertion procedure is quite quick. It takes five to 10 minutes. Most patients will have mild period-like cramping discomfort during the insertion, and we recommend taking some simple pain relief before coming in to have it done. If the pain is too much or you're too uncomfortable, we can always take a break or have a chat about inserting it in under anaesthetic. Most pain during a procedure is short-lived and will settle within a few minutes.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (01:12):**

An intrauterine device can be used for other things than contraception alone. It can be useful in the management of heavy menstrual bleeding, in period pain, and also in the perimenopause and menopause time to manage bleeding.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (01:28):**

Heavy menstrual bleeding is different for everyone. It's any bleeding that's significant enough that it starts to impact your life. For some people that's changing pads or tampons every hour. For other people, it's passing large clots or flooding their sheets. If you have any bleeding that's starting to cause you to become tired or fatigued, it's worth having a chat to your GP.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (01:52):**

Your doctor would start by taking a full history of your symptoms, and sometimes performing an examination. We may also order some other tests, which can include blood tests or an ultrasound scan to see what might be causing the bleeding.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (02:08):**

The management depends on the cause. We often start with simple things like increasing the iron and vitamin C in your diet, to make up for any bleeding that you've had that's excessive. We also look at medical management options, which can include the oral contraceptive pill or the intrauterine device, as well as certain other hormones to help, and medications to help minimise the bleeding that you're having overall. Lastly, we can look at surgical management options, which can include treatment of polyps, fibroids, and other conditions like endometriosis, which may be contributing.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (02:39):**

For anyone considering IUD, I would recommend coming and having a chat to your GP or a women's health specialist for more information about the procedure.

**End of transcript**

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