

The Instead Softcup FAQ Sheet

Q: Can I feel the INSTEAD Softcup when it is in?

A: No, when the INSTEAD Softcup is inserted correctly you should not even feel that it is in place . this allows you to go about your day without the constant reminder that you are on your period.

Q: Can Teenage girls wear the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: Yes, there are no age restrictions with this product. However, teens should thoroughly review instructions on proper fit and insertion before trying the INSTEAD Softcup. Also, Successful placement and removal of the cup requires knowledge and a level of comfort with your body.

Q: Does the use of the INSTEAD Softcup cause a women to lose her virginity?

A: Almost all virgins can wear the INSTEAD Softcup. There are many myths and misunderstanding about "virginity." The best definition of a virgin is a woman who has never had sexual intercourse. In most cases, having intercourse does not change a woman's vagina. With very few exceptions, even a Doctor cannot tell whether or not a woman is a virgin by examining her vagina and pelvic organs. Neither is the vagina altered by use of a tampon, Softcup, or other vaginal device. The "hymen" is a ring of tissue that surrounds the vaginal opening.

When you examine yourself with a mirror, the hymen will appear as irregular flaps of tissue surrounding the opening. Almost all infant girls are born with an open hymen, which remains open throughout their lives. In fact only a VERY FEW female infants are born with an "intact" hymen, that is, the hymen actually covers the vaginal opening. But even in these cases, the hymen generally opens on its own before puberty. This is the source of many myths about virginity, and about how the penis must "break" the hymen of a virgin.

Fortunately, the intact hymen is extremely rare by the time a girl reaches puberty, and is considered an abnormality because it will not allow a normal menses. At menarche (when periods begin), menstrual fluid backs up behind the intact hymen and cannot flow out. This condition is very uncomfortable and requires a minor surgical procedure to open the hymen. So if you have normal menstrual flow, you have a normal, open, hymen.

Q: Does the INSTEAD Softcup have any latex?

A: No, there is absolutely no latex used anywhere in INSTEAD Softcup. The INSTEAD Softcup reservoir is made of Polyethylene. It is non-irritating, non absorbent thermoplastic material that has been used for more than twenty

years in health care items such as catheters and baby bottle nipples.

Q: Does the INSTEAD Softcup come in different sizes?

A: No, our cup is a "one size fits most." This single size was chosen after significant design research showed that it fit almost all women comfortably and securely. Sometimes due to anatomical differences a small minority of women may find the Cup doesn't fit as well as they would like it to.

Q: How do I know if the INSTEAD Softcup doesn't fit?

A: Typically we find that if the INSTEAD Softcup does not fit then most likely your vagina is too small. If this is the case, you will know right away because the Cup will not stay in place behind your pubic bone. If after insertion the Cup tends to slide out or you cannot get the rim behind the pubic bone then the INSTEAD Softcup is probably too large.

Q: Does the INSTEAD Softcup have an expiration date?

A: No, the INSTEAD Softcup does not have an expiration date.

Q: How does the INSTEAD Softcup work?

A: The INSTEAD Softcup is not a tampon or pad. It is a soft, disposable cup you wear to collect and hold rather than absorb your monthly flow.

Q: What is the INSTEAD Softcup made of?

A: The cup is made of Polyethylene and mineral oil. It is non-absorbent, non-irritating thermoplastic material that has been used for more than twenty years in health care items such as catheters and baby bottle nipples.

Q: Are there any special tips for new users?

A: Before trying the INSTEAD Softcup you should first read all of the usage instructions that are included in the package, including the warnings. Like all new activities, such as putting in contact lenses or using a tampon, use of the INSTEAD Softcup may seem awkward at first. It might take a little time to learn how to properly insert and remove. We recommend that you try the INSTEAD Softcup during your light flow days to make sure while you become familiar with its use. Give yourself plenty of time to experiment with the Cup and remember to relax. The first time you use the INSTEAD Softcup on a heavy flow day we recommend that you use a panty liner just for added protection. You will soon learn just how often to change the Cup. Like tampons, if you leave the Cup in too long it will leak.

Stick with it. We believe the benefits of using INSTEAD Softcup more than make up for the initial time it might take time to learn how to use it correctly and comfortably.

Q: Is the INSTEAD Softcup safe?

A: The INSTEAD Softcup has had extensive toxicology, biocompatibility and microbiological laboratory testing. It has also undergone human clinical testing and has been used by thousands of women since it went on the market in 1996. All results support the safety of the INSTEAD Softcup when used as directed. The cup is compatible with a woman's internal tissues, does not promote infection, and is not likely to cause an allergic reaction. The INSTEAD Softcup is made of a blend of polyethylene and synthetic plastics. There is No LATEX. If you are allergic to latex, the INSTEAD Softcup should not cause any latex allergic reaction. The INSTEAD Softcup does not leave fibers behind in your body.

If you feel itching, redness or swelling after you have inserted the INSTEAD Softcup, gently remove it and discontinue use. It is possible that a few individuals could be sensitive to the materials in this or any product.

Q: Are there any women that should not use the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: Women using an intrauterine device or IUD should not use the INSTEAD Softcup as there is a risk of dislodging or removing the IUD by pulling on the IUD string while removing the INSTEAD Softcup.

Women who have ever had TSS should not use any internal sanitary protection product, including the INSTEAD Softcup. Women who have just had a child, miscarriage or abortion, or have been told they have a tilted uterus, consult with a physician before using the INSTEAD Softcup. There are no age limitations on the use of the INSTEAD Softcup and it can be worn by virgins.

Q: How do I insert the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: You may want to start by learning more about your own vaginal anatomy. Begin by inserting your finger just an inch or so into your vaginal opening. Then slide your finger further in until you can feel your cervix at the end of your vagina. (Your cervix is the bottom part of your uterus. It is knob-shaped and about 2 or 3 inches in diameter.)

Before inserting the INSTEAD Softcup, wash your hands. The first time you insert the INSTEAD Softcup, we recommend squatting or sitting on the toilet with your knees apart. When you are in this position, your vaginal canal is horizontal, sloping slightly downward. To insert the INSTEAD Softcup properly,

pick it up and hold it so that the collection reservoir area hangs down from the bottom of the rim. Then, squeeze the opposite sides of the rim together. You will note that when squeezed for insertion, the INSTEAD Softcup is about the same size as a tampon. Gently slide the Cup down toward your tailbone, for insertion. The INSTEAD Softcup will slide into place under the cervix and behind the pubic bone and will come to rest naturally in the anatomical space just below the cervix. Your body will naturally stop the INSTEAD Softcup. Once the Cup is in place insert your finger and feel for the bottom of the collection Cup. You should feel your cervix inside the cup, which means that it is properly positioned. Do not tilt the inside edge of the cup upward as you insert it, because it will bunch up in front of the cervix instead of slipping under and into place behind the cervix where it should be. If that happens, just pull the cup back slightly toward the opening of the vagina, then lift up on the outside edge and try again. When the INSTEAD Softcup is inserted properly, you shouldn't feel it. If you feel something in the vaginal canal, the Cup is probably not far enough inside you. Just remove it and try again. Remember, it will be much easier if you are relaxed. If you are still unable to insert it until it slides comfortably into place, the Cup may be too large for you. This may be true for a small percentage of women. If you want to double check on the fit and/or size of the Softcup, take one with you the next time you visit your Doctor or Nurse Practitioner. S/he can check it for you.

If you are still having trouble inserting the INSTEAD Softcup, here are a few tips. First of all, we recommend that you try inserting the INSTEAD Softcup for the first time on a light flow day or even when you are not having your period, preferably in the privacy of your own home and when you have plenty of time. That way you'll be more relaxed.

Q: Can I insert the INSTEAD Softcup too far?

A: Some women are uncertain just where the INSTEAD Softcup goes and worry that they can insert it too far. When properly inserted, the rim of the cup is lodged between the pubic bone (which is just inside the vagina) and the very back of the vagina, and the cup should cover the cervix (a fleshy knob that feels like the tip of your nose-the cervix is another name for the bottom of your uterus.). The menstrual flow comes out of the uterus through a very small opening in the cervix. The INSTEAD Softcup CANNOT get lost inside the body since this opening is much too narrow

Q: How do I remove the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: To remove the INSTEAD Softcup we recommend sitting on the toilet with your knees apart. Insert your finger into the vagina and locate the pubic bone; the INSTEAD Softcup rim will be right behind it. Hook your finger under the rim. Don't worry; your fingernails cannot puncture the cup. (Some women use their middle finger to remove the cup, as the middle finger tends to be longer than the index finger.) Very slowly pull the INSTEAD Softcup out,

keeping it horizontal and level to the floor. Do not pull down like you do with a tampon, as this can cause spillage. Do not twist; just pull steadily. If you have trouble hooking your finger under the rim, bear or push down with your pelvic muscles and try hooking your finger under the rim again. You can also insert your finger over the rim and into the cup but it will be slightly messier when you remove it. It is not unusual for first time users to make more than one attempt to remove the INSTEAD Softcup. You may want to practice removing the INSTEAD Softcup for the first time when you are not on your period and when you are in the privacy of your own bathroom. It is important to remain relaxed because tense muscles make it harder to remove INSTEAD Softcup. Don't worry; the Cup cannot be lost inside your body, it can be worn safely up to twelve hours. Other removal tips: You may want to try removing the INSTEAD Softcup for the first time when you are having a light flow day or no period. WE recommend your first try to be when you are in the privacy of your own bathroom. Removing the INSTEAD Softcup can be awkward until you have more practice. It is important to remain relaxed because tense muscles make it harder to remove the cup. It may make you more relaxed to know that the INSTEAD Softcup cannot be lost inside your body and that it can be worn safely for up to twelve hours. Some women find that crouching in a warm shower makes removal easier because they are relaxed and less concerned about spillage. Always remember to remove your last INSTEAD Softcup when your period is done, and NEVER WEAR AN INSTEAD SOFTCUP FOR MORE THAN 12 HOURS!

Q: Do I flush the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: No, do not flush the INSTEAD Softcup or the wrapper as this can plug the drain and damage plumbing. To dispose of the cup we recommend that you empty the menstrual fluid contained in the cup into the toilet or, simply put toilet tissue inside the cup to absorb the fluid. Some of our users also place the product inside the new INSTEAD Softcup wrapper for disposal or wrap the INSTEAD Softcup in toilet tissue and throw it away in an appropriate trash receptacle

Q: How long can I wear the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: The maximum wear time for the INSTEAD Softcup is determined by both health considerations and the amount of flow. From a health standpoint, the cup can be worn safely for up to a maximum of twelve hours. But on heavy flow days, you will need to change the Cup more often or leakage will occur. Just how frequently will be something you'll learn as you develop more experience with using the INSTEAD Softcup. In general, you should be able to double your wear time with the INSTEAD Softcup, when you compare it to tampons and pads. If you change every two hours on a heavy day, change the INSTEAD Softcup every four hours. Remember, no form of sanitary protection is leak proof.

Q: Can the INSTEAD Softcup be used as a contraceptive to prevent pregnancy?

A: No, the INSTEAD Softcup is to be used as period protection. Though the cup resembles a diaphragm, it should not be used to prevent pregnancy or prevent transmission of sexually transmitted infections.

Q: Can I have sex with the INSTEAD Softcup in place?

A: Yes, you can have clean, comfortable sex with the INSTEAD Softcup in place. Although individual experience may vary, most likely neither you nor your partner will be able to feel the cup. To help avoid leakage on heavy flow days, insert a new cup immediately before intercourse. Remember that the INSTEAD Softcup is not a contraceptive and does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.

Q: What are the benefits of the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: Yes, the INSTEAD Softcup offers wearers numerous benefits over other period product options. Here are just a few ways the INSTEAD Softcup is better than its competitors: The INSTEAD Softcup cup has no external strings or wings. The INSTEAD Softcup works for your entire period, light, medium and heavy flow days! AKA, there is no need to buy several different products. The INSTEAD Softcup can often be worn longer than a tampon, up to a maximum of twelve hours. When inserted correctly, the INSTEAD Softcup is a very comfortable form of feminine protect whether you're sitting, swimming, sleeping, or exercising. Although the INSTEAD Softcup is not a contraceptive, it allows you to have clean comfortable sex during your period. You can insert an INSTEAD Softcup anytime you think you might be getting your period to help prevent accidents or any time you experience normal irregular spotting. Women taking oral contraceptives, or using injectable contraceptives often experience irregular spotting. While this is certainly considered a normal side effect of these methods, it can result in staining or spotting of clothing.

The INSTEAD Softcup is non-absorbent so the vaginal tissues do not dry out removal is easier. By contrast, tampons can be so absorbent that they adhere to vaginal walls, making removal more difficult and uncomfortable. Since menstrual fluid does not come into contact with the air, the Cup helps prevent the occurrence of odor, leaving you feeling fresh and clean.

Q: Can the INSTEAD Softcup leak?

A: Even though the INSTEAD Softcup provides more longer lasting protection than other forms of sanitary protection, no sanitary protection product is leak proof. From a health standpoint the INSTEAD Softcup can be worn safely for up to twelve hours, but some women will need to change it more frequently than that on heavy flow days. Just how frequently will be something you'll

learn as you develop more experience with using INSTEAD Softcup. In general, women should be able to double wear time with INSTEAD Softcup, when compared to tampons and pads. The first time you use the INSTEAD Softcup on a heavy flow day, we recommend wearing a pantiliner or pad to protect you from accidents until you become accustomed to how frequently you need to change the cup.

You may notice some leakage when going to the bathroom. This is because when you void urine or your bowel, the muscles "bear down" and can push the rim slightly forward, allowing some fluid to leak out and into the toilet. When you relax from voiding, the cup moves back into position and the leaking stops. If this is the only time you observe leakage, it is normal and the INSTEAD Softcup is inserted correctly. If you experience leakage during heavy exercise or during intercourse, you may have waited too long to change the cup. Remember to insert a new cup before intercourse or before engaging in a strenuous physical activity. (The INSTEAD Softcup is not a contraceptive and does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.)

Q: Can the Cup cause cramping or discomfort?

A: Occasionally, a woman will experience some discomfort when using the Softcup. If the discomfort occurs right after inserting the Cup, it may be inserted incorrectly (see question on "fit"), or it may actually be too large. If so, it will protrude slightly from the vaginal opening. If you normally experience menstrual cramps, the Cup will probably not change the cramping that you experience. A small percentage of women may experience more menstrual cramping while wearing the Cup. If so, simply remove the Cup and see if the cramping subsides. If so, you may still want to try the Cup another time. If the cramping does not change, then wearing the Cup is probably not having any effect.

Q: Can I use the INSTEAD Softcup during other times of the month?

A: Yes, the INSTEAD Softcup can be worn whenever feminine protection is needed. If your periods are regular, you can insert an INSTEAD Softcup just before you get your period to help prevent accidents. Also, you can wear the INSTEAD Softcup any day of the month that you experience normal irregular bleeding to help prevent staining or spotting of clothing.

Q: Is there a risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome?

A: Laboratory studies show that the INSTEAD Softcup does not promote growth of the kind of bacteria that causes TSS. Use of super absorbent tampons that contain hundreds of fibers is associated with an increased risk of acquiring TSS. Unlike tampons, the INSTEAD Softcup has no fibers and is not absorbent. To date, we have not had any reported cases of TSS, but we continue to monitor to determine the actual risk of TSS.

Q: Can I urinate or have a bowel movement while wearing the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: Yes, you can urinate or move your bowels normally while you have the INSTEAD Softcup in. However, you may notice some slight blood or menstrual fluid leakage during this time. This happens when you void your bladder or your bowel, the muscles "bear down" and can push the rim slightly forward, allowing some fluid to leak out and into the toilet. When you relax from voiding, the cup moves back into position and the leaking stops. If this is the only time you observe leakage, it is normal and the INSTEAD Softcup is inserted correctly.

Q: Can I re-use the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: The INSTEAD Softcup is designed as a single use menstruation collection cup and should not be worn more than once. Each INSTEAD Softcup is safe for use up to 12 hours. However, the cup should never be re-used since doing so may expose you to the risk of vaginal infection.

Q: Where can I buy the INSTEAD Softcup?

A: Walgreen's, Rite Aid, Kroger, Peyton, Wal-Mart, Target, Supervalu, Longs, CVS, Longs, Safeway, Save Mart, Raley's, Ralph's, and Fred Meyer. If you cannot find it in your area store, we ask that you request the manager stock the product. It is up to each individual store manager to decide as to what to put on the shelf. The more requests, the more likely they will stock the INSTEAD Softcup.

Q: If I cannot find the INSTEAD Softcup at my local stores, can I order it anywhere else?

A: You can always order product through this website or by call us toll free: 877-367-9636.

Q: Is the INSTEAD Softcup available outside the US?

A: The INSTEAD Softcup is available in the following countries Australia, Canada, Hungary, Belgium, Luxemburg, Netherlands, and Poland, Mexico and Brazil. If you cannot find the INSTEAD Softcup in your area, you can order on this website.

Q: I am trying to get pregnant.

A: Would inserting an INSTEAD Softcup Immediately after intercourse help

trap sperm in place to help increase the probability that I get pregnant? A: The INSTEAD, Inc. has not studied the post-intercourse placement of an INSTEAD Softcup as a method to help improve the probability of conception. However, the INSTEAD Softcup, based on its design, when properly in place does trap menstrual fluid from flowing down from the cervix into the vagina. So, placement immediately after intercourse would retain fluids flowing downward, keeping them trapped around the entrance of the cervix until the removal of the INSTEAD Softcup.