

Depo Provera Fact Sheet

Depo Provera has been used as a method of birth control worldwide, for over 30 years. It contains a single hormone, much like the progesterone that is made by a woman's ovaries. Oral contraceptives, the contraceptive patch and ring also contain this hormone (as well as estrogen). Depo Provera contraceptive injection works right away to provide reliable birth control for 3 months (or 12 weeks) per injection. It is 99.7% effective in prevention of pregnancy.

Depo Provera works by preventing a woman from ovulating – if no egg is released, no egg is present for sperm to fertilize. Also, with Depo Provera, your body doesn't build a thick uterine lining which means that over time your menstrual bleeding may become very light and even stop. This is not something to be worried about; actually most women consider this an advantage.

Depo Provera must be given every 3 months (12 weeks) to be effective. The initial injection must be given during the first five days of the menstrual period and then at regularly scheduled, 3 month intervals. If a scheduled injection has been delayed or missed, a pregnancy test will need to be obtained before the next injection will be given. After stopping Depo Provera injections, women may not begin menstrual bleeding (periods) from 9 to 24 months. The majority of women usually resume within 12 months.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: Depo Provera should not be used in women with known or suspected pregnancy, undiagnosed vaginal bleeding, known or suspected breast cancer, blood clots or previous history of blood clots, stroke, liver disease, or allergy to Depo Provera.

SIDE EFFECTS: Some women may develop unwanted side effects such as headache, hair changes, mood changes/depression, tiredness, stomachache, weight changes, or breast swelling/tenderness. These side effects are no different than those reported with other contraceptives. **Depo Provera may cause bone density loss (osteoporosis) with long term use and calcium supplementation (approximately 1200 mg daily) is recommended along with weight-bearing exercises, avoidance of smoking, caffeine, and alcohol use.**

ADVANTAGES:

1. Highly effective
2. Private/convenient
3. No estrogen related side effects
4. Immediately effective if dosing is given at correct time
5. Reduced blood loss from scant menstrual bleeding
6. Menstrual bleeding may stop
7. May decrease PMS, menstrual cramps, ovulatory pain

DISADVANTAGES:

1. Once injection given will remain in body for 3months unlike other birth control which can be stopped at any time.
2. Requires medical personnel for injections
3. Changes menstrual cycle with irregular bleeding/spotting or no periods.
4. Fertility may not be regained for 9 to 24 months after stopping injections
5. Does not prevent sexually transmitted diseases/infections (such as HIV)
6. Weight changes are common (gain or loss)
7. Bone density loss in long term use

7/04, Rev 11/13, 7/15, 6/16