



FACT SHEET: DEPO-PROVERA (medroxyprogesterone or DMPA) CONTRACEPTIVE SHOT

An injection taken every 3 months (12 weeks). AKA “the shot.”

How effective is Depo-Provera?

The shot is 96% effective. Nothing except abstinence is 100%. Keep in mind that the shot does not prevent any sexually transmitted infections – it is only for birth control. *To help with birth control and significantly decrease your risk of STIs, use a condom.*

How do I get it?

It is a shot in the arm, or the butt muscle scheduled every 12 weeks at Health Services.

You should NOT get the shot if you have the following conditions:

Pregnancy (current)	Breast cancer	Allergic to any part of the pill
Undiagnosed abnormal genital bleeding	Taking certain medications for seizures or tuberculosis, HIV	Liver disease or tumors
Poorly controlled high blood pressure	Blood clots	Diabetes, smoking, stroke, and older age

What are the possible side effects of the shot?

Serious side effects (uncommon in healthy women): low bone density, severe headaches, or very heavy bleeding. A *slight* increase in breast cancer was found in those who used it up to 4 years before the age of 35. Depo-Provera may be associated with a small risk of meningioma, a benign brain tumor, in patients who start it older than 31 years, or who use it for more than 4 years. *Smoking increases the risk of serious cardiovascular events which are usually rare.* It is recommended to stop Depo-Provera after **2 years** of continuous use.

Moderate or minor side effects: bleeding irregularity or no period.

Less common side effects: bloating, headache, weight gain, dizziness, weakness, change in sex drive, or allergic reaction or mood changes. It may cause a prolonged return to fertility after stopping, from a few months to a year.

How to start taking the shot?

Use a condom as backup for 7 days after receiving your first Depo-Provera shot.

Quick Start: Take the first injection if you are reasonably sure that you are not pregnant. Take a pregnancy test in 1 month to confirm.

Next Period Start: Take the first injection on the first day of your next period to be more reassured that you are not pregnant.

What should I do if I miss my appointment for an injection?

If you miss a shot, make an appointment ASAP. Use backup protection until you get your shot, plus one week of backup. If you are more than 2 weeks late (instead of 12 weeks, it has been 14 weeks since your last shot), you will have a urine pregnancy test at your appointment before getting the shot.

Try to keep on top of your Depo-Provera schedule by making an appointment in 12 weeks for your next one right after you receive it.

Discuss with your medical provider if you are having trouble keeping your appointments and want to consider changing to a long-acting contraceptive method that lasts for 3-10 years.

Is Depo-Provera a medication?

Yes. Inform your other health care providers that you are getting Depo-Provera. Other medications and herbs can change its effectiveness or vice versa.

Can I use Depo-Provera if I am breastfeeding?

Yes. Most pregnancy doctors recommend waiting for 6 weeks after delivery to start.

For more information, please ask your medical provider or pharmacist and read the package insert for your birth control.