

# Depo-Provera Contraception

**DO YOU HAVE TROUBLE REMEMBERING TO TAKE PILLS? PREFER A MORE PRIVATE BIRTH CONTROL METHOD? NEED RELIABLE BIRTH CONTROL AND CANNOT TAKE OR DO NOT WANT BIRTH CONTROL PILLS?**

## WHAT ARE BIRTH CONTROL SHOTS?

The “shot” is a medicine called Depo-Provera, which contains a hormone very similar to the hormone (progesterone) a woman normally produces during the last two weeks of her menstrual cycle. This hormone is given by injection (a shot) every 12 weeks and works by stopping an egg from leaving the ovaries. Pregnancy cannot occur if an egg is not present for the male's sperm to fertilize.

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF USING DEPO-PROVERA FOR BIRTH CONTROL?

Nothing needs to be taken daily or used at the time of intercourse  
Is very effective in preventing pregnancy (99% or more)  
Privacy is a major advantage (No one can tell you are using this method)  
May help with menstrual cramping and PMS  
May help prevent cancer of the ovaries and uterus  
Can be used by many women who cannot take birth control pills  
Can be used by breastfeeding women (after 6 weeks of nursing)

## WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES OF THIS METHOD OF BIRTH CONTROL?

Depo-Provera usually causes menstrual periods to be very irregular. You may spot or bleed of and on all month or not have any bleeding at all. (This is considered normal) Some women gain weight. To avoid weight gain, watch your calories and exercise. You must return every 12 weeks to the clinic to get your injection. Depo-Provera **DOES NOT protect you against HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted infections**. It MAY be several months before you periods return to normal after stopping the shot. A few women experience acne, headaches, hair growth or loss, or have an allergy to Depo-Provera. It is not known if Depo-Provera increases the risk of osteoporosis (brittle bone disease) and cancer of the breast.

**IF YOU EXPERIENCE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING DANGER SIGNS, CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR OR EMERGENCY PROVIDER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:**

Chest pain or shortness of breath  
Severe headache, blurred vision, or loss of vision  
Heavy bright red bleeding from your vagina (more than 1 pad/tampon every 2 hours)

Severe pain, pus, or bleeding at the site of the injection  
You think you might be pregnant  
You have a late period after your periods have been on time  
Severe abdominal pain.

**PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HIV/AIDS AND OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED  
INFECTIONS BY USING CONDOMS EVERY TIME YOU HAVE SEX**