



Depo Provera Information and Instructions

How does Depo Provera work?

Depo Provera contains a hormone like your body makes and it works by primarily stopping the ovary from releasing an egg. Without an egg, you cannot get pregnant. Although no birth control method is perfect, Depo Provera is more than 99% effective as long as the shot is given every 3 months.

How do I use Depo Provera?

You are given a Depo Provera shot in the arm or in the buttocks every 11-13 weeks. The first shot should usually be given during the first 5 days of your menstrual bleeding. This can prevent you from inadvertently getting the shot when you are pregnant and also decreases the chances of irregular bleeding. You should use condoms for one week after the first shot. It is important to continue Depo Provera on a prescribed schedule for it to be most effective.

What if I am late for the next shot?

If you wait longer than 13 weeks to receive your next Depo Provera injection, you may be asked to come to the office for a pregnancy test. You may be asked to abstain from intercourse and return in 14 days to repeat a pregnancy test before you can receive your next injection. You will need to use a back up form of contraception, such as condoms, for 14 days after your late injection to be protected from pregnancy.

What if I am late getting a shot and had unprotected sex?

If your last shot was more than 13 weeks ago, you can take emergency contraception right after unprotected sex. Emergency contraception can prevent pregnancy up to 3 days after sex but is most effective the sooner you take it.

How will I feel on Depo Provera?

Depo Provera can have an effect on your menstrual cycle. It is likely that you will experience irregular bleeding for the first three months of Depo Provera. After the second injection, some people will stop having a menstrual period altogether. Other people will have occasional irregular spotting or bleeding. Some people will have spotting or bleeding on a daily basis.

Depo Provera may have other side effects in some women including weight gain, breast tenderness, headaches, and mood changes such as depression.

What else should I know about Depo Provera?

After you stop Depo Provera it may take a few months (or up to 18 months) for your fertility to return to normal.

Depo Provera may result in significant loss of bone mineral density. The loss of density in the bones is greater the longer the drug is used. It is unknown if this will increase your risk of fractures later in life. The American Congress of OB/GYN (ACOG) believes it is appropriate to use Depo Provera for more than two years if women cannot or do not wish to use other forms of contraception. Regular exercise, stopping smoking, calcium and vitamin D supplementation might help to reduce bone loss.

Depo Provera does not protect against sexually transmitted infections to include HIV. It is always recommended to use condoms when engaging in sexual activity.

The following are unusual adverse reactions. Call our office right away if you experience:

- sharp chest pain, coughing up blood, or sudden shortness of breath (indicating a possible clot in the lung)
- sudden severe headache or vomiting, dizziness or fainting, problems with your eyesight or speech, weakness, or numbness in an arm or leg (indicating a possible stroke)
- severe pain or swelling in the calf (indicating a possible clot in the leg)
- sudden blindness, partial or complete (indicating a possible clot in the blood vessels of the eye)
- unusually heavy vaginal bleeding
- severe pain or tenderness in the lower abdominal area
- persistent pain, pus, or bleeding at the injection site
- yellowing of the eyes or skin
- hives
- difficulty breathing
- swelling of the face, mouth, tongue or neck

If you have any questions, please call the office at (850) 476-3696.