

Injectables

DMPA-IM (Depo-Provera)



How methods works:

- Depo-provera is a brand of progestin-only injectables that contains the hormone progestin
- Progestin makes the mucus around the cervix thick, this stops the sperm from meeting the egg
- This hormone also prevents ovulation (the monthly release of eggs from the ovaries)
- You should get an injection once every 3 months

Important facts:

- This method is reversible. It can be stopped at any time, either to switch to another method or to get pregnant
- You maintain your privacy, no one can tell you are using an injectable method
- Does not interfere with sexual intercourse

General information

- Depo-provera is a type of injectable contraceptive given every 3 months to prevent pregnancy
- You may begin the method 6 weeks after giving birth and it is safe for women who are breastfeeding
- It may cause irregular or no menstrual bleeding
- It does not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), including HIV.
- Safe for a woman living with HIV/AIDs even if she takes antiretroviral medicines

Effectiveness for pregnancy prevention:

- Pregnancy rate in first year of use is about 1 pregnancy per 100 women (1%) if used correctly, i.e. no missed or late injections
- Missed or late injections may result in about 3 pregnancies per 100 women (3%)

NOTE:

After the Depo provera is stopped, return to fertility varies between 6 months to 2 years.

If a woman intends to get pregnant in the near future, she can switch to a shorter acting method.



Method not advised if you:

- Are breastfeeding infant less than 6 weeks of age
- Have high blood pressure
- Have multiple cardiovascular risk factors such as hypertension, obesity, older age or have other diseases of the heart or blood vessels (Discuss with your provider who will give you more details)
- Have breast lump or a family history of breast cancer
- Have unexplained vaginal bleeding
- Take medications for seizures or take rifampicin (which may reduce the effectiveness of the method)
- Have lupus or history of severe liver disease

Side effect:

- In the beginning, you may have irregular bleeding, prolonged bleeding, light brownish to red occasional bleeding or spotting. Later on, there may be no monthly bleeding.
- These changes may continue until the injection wears off (2-3 months)
- Some women may have weight gain, headaches, dizziness, and other side effects. Do not be alarmed as these are not signs of illness
- Not all women have these side effects

Health benefit

- May help prevent cancer of the lining of the uterus.
- May help prevent uterine fibroids
- May help protect against Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)
- May help prevent iron deficiency anemia
- May help reduce symptoms of endometriosis (pelvic pain, irregular bleeding).

How to use:

- Go to a family planning clinic to get an injection
- Get your injections every 3 months. If you do not get your injection and you have sexual intercourse, you can get pregnant
- Even if you are late for your injection, come back to see your provider, you may still be able to get your injection

Follow up:

- Return every 3 months to get the next injection.
- Try to keep to a regular schedule
- You may come up to 2 weeks early for injection.
- No matter how late you are, do discuss with your provider on when to get your injection.
- If you are late for your injection, abstain from sex or use condoms until you get an injection

Return to the health care facility any time if:

- You have any questions or problems
- You need another injection
- You develop any health problems
- You are late for your injection, had sex in the past 5 days, and want to avoid pregnancy.
- You think you are pregnant

This material is adapted from a similar material by Society for Family Health (SFH)

