

North Carolina Women's Hospital

Information about Depo Provera

It can be hard to make decisions about birth control. You have chosen Depo Provera. Please read this information before your first shot to make sure that you have the information you need for yourself and your family. Ask your health care provider any questions that you have after you read this information.

What Are Reasons to Choose Depo Provera?

- Depo Provera is a birth control method that works very well to prevent pregnancy. In fact, it is more effective than birth control pills or an IUD.
- It is easy to use; you just need to get a shot every 11 to 13 weeks.
- It is a completely private birth control method.

How do I know if Depo Provera is for me?

- Depo Provera may cause side effects such as:
 - changes in your period or no period at all; in fact, you may bleed every day for the first 3 months and then not bleed at all
 - weight gain
 - bone mineral changes
 - headaches
- Depo Provera may reduce your breast milk or prevent your milk from coming in well, especially if it is given before you leave the hospital.
- If you are breastfeeding, some health care providers suggest that you wait six weeks before getting the first Depo Provera shot.

Are there women who should not choose Depo Provera?

You should **NOT** use Depo Provera if you:

- think you may be pregnant
- want to become pregnant in the next year
- have vaginal bleeding without a known reason
- have had breast cancer
- have had liver problems
- have a history of allergy to Depo Provera
- have a history of severe depression

- If you have a clotting disorder, a history of clots, or a family history of clotting problems, you should talk to your health care provider about the safety of Depo Provera.
- You should also talk to your provider if you had gestational diabetes in your last pregnancy.

What else should I think about when I choose Depo Provera?

- If you have sex within 2 weeks after your first Depo Provera shot, you should protect yourself against pregnancy by another method, such as condoms.
- Depo Provera does not protect you against sexually transmitted infections. The only certain protection is no sex at all. Using condoms with Depo Provera can help protect against sexually transmitted infections.
- Think ahead: Will you be able to go to your health care provider in 11 to 13 weeks to get another shot? Some women may find it hard to take time off from work or to get a ride to the clinic – a different method may work better in that case.
- Think about the cost: One shot of Depo Provera costs about the same as 3 months of birth control pills. If you are worried about cost, talk to your health care provider.
- If you get a Depo shot, you will need to be seen again in 11-13 weeks for your next visit. Plan now to make that appointment.

Approved by NC Women's Hospital Patient Education Committee, November 18, 2002