



Depo-Provera

What is it?

Depo-Provera is a long-acting form of birth control. This form of birth control does not contain the hormone estrogen. It contains the hormone progesterone. This form of birth control is given as a needle once every 10 to 13 weeks (four times a year).

How does it work?

Prevents a woman's ovary from releasing an egg. Changes the lining and mucus of the cervix (entrance to uterus), which makes it hard for the sperm to reach the egg.

Advantages

- Does not contain the hormone estrogen
- One shot lasts for three months
- Rate of success is not reduced by other medications
- May be okay for breastfeeding mothers to use
- May be okay for women over the age of 35 who smoke to use
- Makes your period lighter
- May improve the symptoms of conditions common for women (endometriosis, premenstrual syndrome, and chronic pelvic pain)
- Reduces the pain a woman feels from her period
- May reduce the risk of some forms of cancer

Considerations

- Use may result in a higher risk for some bone diseases (osteoporosis)
- Use may result in bleeding or spotting
- Should only be used as a form of birth control if other methods have been tried and do not work
- Should only be used for a short period of time
- May cause women to gain weight

How to use Depo-Provera

A woman will get a shot in her upper arm or buttocks every 10 to 13 weeks from a health care professional (four times a year).

Typical success rate

Successful for 9.7 to 9.9 people out of 10.

Sexually transmitted infection (STI) protection

Depo-Provera does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Use a condom, dental dam, or glove for each sex act.

References

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2009).
Choosing a contraceptive that is right for u. Retrieved from <http://www.sexualityandu.ca>
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