## Where can you get the shot?

The "shot" is given by a qualified health care provider; it requires a prescription. Call your local family planning clinic for information.

# CARDEA Training, Organizational Development and Research

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# The Shot (injection)

#### How the shot works

Depo-Provera® (Depo) is an injectable method of contraception (a shot) that is given every 3 months/12 weeks. It contains one hormone, a form of progestin. Depo works by stopping your body from releasing an egg, so no egg is present to be fertilized; it also causes the cervical mucus (liquid at the opening of the uterus) to thicken, which can stop sperm from getting into the uterus.

#### How to use the shot

An injection (shot) of Depo is given every 3 months/12 weeks. Depo may be given immediately after an abortion and delivery of a baby.

#### **Effectiveness**

About two women in 1,000 will get pregnant in one year if they get their shots on time, every 12 weeks (99.8% perfect use effectiveness). If they are late getting the shot, the chance of pregnancy goes up. Typical use is 6 out of 100 women may get pregnant in one year (94% effectiveness).



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#### Benefits of the shot

The shot does not interrupt sexual activity and is private. A woman may have very light bleeding or no periods after several months on Depo and no cramps or PMS. Depo can be used while breastfeeding. The shot is excellent short-term birth control for women who need effective birth control while waiting for a sterilization procedure.

There is no estrogen in Depo-Provera®; women who cannot take estrogen may wish to try Depo. As with other progestin-only methods of contraception, taking Depo lowers the risk of endometrial and ovarian cancer, anemia, ectopic pregnancy, and pelvic infection. Depo-Provera® has also been found to decrease the frequency of grand mal seizures and sickle cell crises.

### Potential side effects and disadvantages

When you first start on Depo, there may be irregular spotting or bleeding, especially during the first six months. You may have heavier periods or stop getting your periods. You may also have increased appetite and slight weight gain or feel bloated, or have mood changes and/or nausea.

Taking Depo-Provera® will lower your natural estrogen levels and might decrease the strength of your bones. Ask your health care provider about Depo and "bone loss."

Depo can make existing depression worse, and women who have severe postpartum depression should delay use of this method.

If you are getting the shot and want to get pregnant, you could be fertile within a month or two after your last injection. Depo-Provera® may stay in your body for six to eight months and may delay a return to fertility.

Using injectable birth control <u>will not</u> give you protection against HIV (AIDS) or sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as chlamydia, herpes, genital warts (HPV), gonorrhea, hepatitis B and syphilis.

#### **Potential risks**

Some women should not use the shot because of existing health conditions. Ask your health care provider about your risks.