

The Birth Control Shot/ Contraceptive Injection



Depo Provera



What is the contraceptive injection?

The contraceptive injection, also known as “the birth control shot” or its brand name “Depo Provera” is an effective and reversible type of hormonal birth control that is given via injection (a needle). It is a type of synthetic progesterone, but does not contain estrogen. A doctor or nurse will give the injection every three months



How does it work?

The injection contains a hormone called progestin. This hormone prevents ovulation (prevents the egg from leaving the ovary) and thickens the cervical mucus, making it harder for sperm to enter the uterus. It also changes the lining of the uterus so it is harder for a fertilized egg to implant and/or grow.



How do I use the contraceptive injection?

A doctor or nurse will give you the injection of Depo Provera in a muscle (usually the upper arm or buttocks). You will get the first shot when you are having your period, and then you must come in every 11-13 weeks for your next dose.



Where can I get the contraceptive injection? What is the cost?

The injection (Depo Provera) is a medication that a doctor can prescribe for you. At a pharmacy, one shot costs **\$30-40** (lasts 12 weeks/3 months). It is covered by most insurance.



Are there any side effects?

- Irregular bleeding is a common side effect, as is spotting for several months after beginning injections. Some users may stop their period all together
- Depo Provera can result in decreased bone mineral density with more loss the longer it is used.. This may increase the risk of bone fractures. The reduction in bone mineral density can be reversed after stopping Depo Provera.
- Other side effects include headaches, mood changes, weight gain, dizziness, bloating, and decreased sex drive



How effective is the contraceptive injection?

The contraceptive injection is 99% effective at preventing pregnancy if you get your injections every three months. Based on typical use (such as receiving a shot late), it is **94% effective**. Depo Provera does NOT offer any protection against sexually transmitted infections or HIV.

Sexual Health Resource Centre
Student Union Building Room 509



SHRC.ASU@acadiau.ca
@SHRCAcadia