

DMPA INJECTIONS – “THE BIRTH CONTROL SHOT”

What are birth control shots? The type of shot that we currently use is called depo-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA). It is a hormone much like the progesterone a woman produces naturally. It stops the ovaries from passing an egg and has other contraceptive effects.

ADVANTAGES:

- Nothing needs to be taken daily or at the time of sexual intercourse.
- Extremely effective. If women receive the injections right on time (every 13 weeks or 3 months), only 3 women in 1,000 become pregnant in the course of a year.
- Women lose less blood using DMPA and have less menstrual cramps.
- Privacy is a major advantage. No one needs to know you are using this method.
- Nursing mothers can receive DMPA injections—best after the baby is 6 weeks old.
- It is okay to start a new contraceptive if it is less than 13 weeks since the last shot.
- May lead to an improvement in PMS, depression, or symptoms from endometriosis.

DISADVANTAGES:

- DMPA injections can lead to very irregular periods. If your bleeding pattern is bothersome to you, there are medications that can be given to you which may make you have a more acceptable pattern of bleeding. It may be several months before your periods return to normal after your last shot.
- Some women gain weight. To avoid weight gain, watch your calories and get plenty of exercise.
- You have to return to the doctor's office every three months for your injection.
- Depression and premenstrual symptoms may improve or get worse.
- DMPA does not protect you from HIV or other infections. Use condoms if you are at risk.
- DMPA may cause bone loss, although this is not certain. Get regular exercise and consider taking extra calcium to protect your bones from osteoporosis.
- An occasional woman is allergic to DMPA.

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

WHEN SHOULD I GET MY FIRST INJECTION? We provide the first shot when a woman is on her period or within five days of the start of the period.

WHAT IF I HAVE SEX AND I AM LATE FOR MY SHOT? Be sure to use condoms or another method of birth control. If you are late for your shot, you will be given a pregnancy test prior to your next injection.

DMPA is a compound “generic” medication, not Depo-Provera (a specific brand of DMPA made by Pharmacia/Upjohn Pharmaceuticals).

I have read and understand the above. All of my questions have been answered and I wish to proceed with DMPA as my contraceptive method.

Patient's Signature

Date