

What are the disadvantages?

Once you have had an injection of Depo Provera the contraceptive effects last at least 12 weeks. Other effects may last for a short time or for even longer.

INITIAL IRREGULAR OR PROLONGED BLEEDING

Some women have irregular or prolonged bleeding. This is more common on first starting to use Depo Provera and often improves with time. It can be treated by using the combined contraceptive pill for 1 month or having the next injection earlier.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

All hormonal contraception (including pills and Depo Provera) may produce some effects in some women. The effects are usually short term and often settle with time. Most women do not have these side effects.

- Mood changes: some women feel better, others notice irritability and depression, most do not notice any changes
- Weight changes: some women put on weight, some lose weight, most do not change weight
- Interest in sex: some women find they are less interested in sex
- Vaginal dryness: most women do not notice any change
- Headaches: most women do not notice any change
- Allergic reaction: extremely rare.

BONE DENSITY

Depo Provera has been associated with a reduction in bone density. This improves after stopping Depo Provera.

Risk factors for low bone density include: family history of osteoporosis, smoking, steroid use, malabsorption, low weight, poor diet (low in calcium).

Protective factors are: not smoking, weight bearing exercise, good diet (high in calcium), moderate sunshine.

CANCER

The risk of endometrial cancer is reduced by 80%.

There is no overall change in the rate of cancer of the cervix, the ovary or breast cancer.

Using Depo Provera

The injection is given every 12 weeks. It is available from a Family Planning clinic, your doctor or midwife.



If you have your first injection during the first 5 days of your period you will be protected from pregnancy straight away. If you have the injection at any other time during your menstrual cycle you will not be protected for 7 days.

It is important to have your injections every 12 weeks, because some women are able to get pregnant straight away.

After having a baby, it is ideal to wait 6 weeks before your first injection. This reduces your chance of irregular bleeding.

If you have Depo Provera and you are already pregnant there is no evidence it will harm the baby.

Depo Provera does not protect you from sexually transmissible infections.

Condoms help protect against sexually transmissible infections.

For more information about Family Planning resources, clinics and health promotion services go to our website, familyplanning.org.nz

Depo Provera

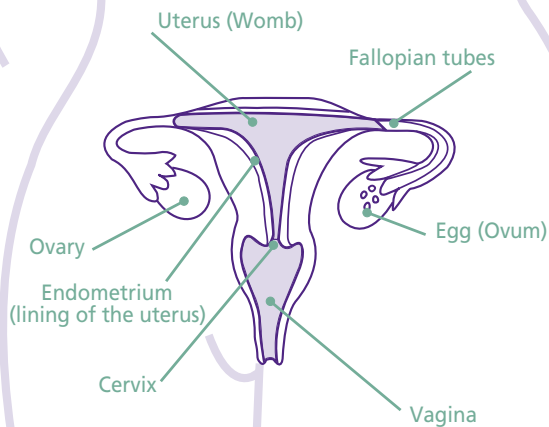
What is Depo Provera?

Depo Provera (“the injection”, DP) is a contraceptive injection containing progesterone. This hormone is similar to one of the hormones produced naturally by our ovaries. The injection is given every 12 weeks.

How does it work?

It prevents pregnancy by stopping the ovaries releasing an egg each month.

Also there are changes to the lining of the womb (endometrium). For women not taking Depo Provera the lining of the womb builds up each month and then comes away as a period. For women taking Depo Provera the lining becomes a thin stable layer and many women only have a few periods or no periods at all. This is safe, and helps protect against endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the womb). Some women continue to have periods.



How effective is it?

Depo Provera is almost 100% effective. This means that less than 1 woman out of 100 will get pregnant each year.

Who can use it?

Almost all women can use Depo Provera, even women who cannot use the combined contraceptive pill (“the pill”).

Who should not use it?

Women who have had breast cancer.

Women who are planning a pregnancy in the next few months may prefer to use an alternative form of contraceptive. This is because after using Depo Provera the average time to return to normal

periods and fertility is 6 months after the injection runs out (it may be straight away or up to 2 years later).

Using Depo Provera does **not** affect your fertility.

What are the advantages?

IT WORKS

Depo Provera is almost 100% effective.

IT IS CONVENIENT

- lasts for 12 weeks
- no daily pill taking
- doesn't interfere with sexual intercourse
- no one else needs to know you are using it.

PROTECTION

Depo Provera reduces the risk of endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the womb) by 80%.

OTHER POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES

- it can decrease pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS)
- if often helps women who have heavy or painful periods.

