

VALLEY WOMEN'S CLINIC, PLLC

17722 Talbot Road South
Renton, WA 98055-5744
Appointments: 425-228-0722
Fax: 425-271-2566
www.valleywomens.com

All About Depo-Provera

Depo-Provera is a shot that keeps you from getting pregnant for 12 weeks. The shot contains a hormone that prevents women's eggs from leaving her ovaries. It also thickens the mucus at the opening of the uterus, so sperm cannot get inside.

How well does Depo-Provera work?

Depo-Provera is very good at keeping women from getting pregnancy. Only about 3 in 1000 women who use the shot for a year get pregnant

How is Depo-Provera given?

The first shot should be given by the fifth day after your period starts. The shot is given in the buttocks or the arm. You may have some soreness where the shot was given.

How long does it work?

If is given by the fifth day of your period, Depo-Provera starts to work right away. It keeps working for 12 weeks. The shot slowly wears off over that time. If you want to continue using Depo-Provera as your birth control method, you must come back for a shot every 12 weeks.

What do some women like about using Depo-Provera

- It works very well to prevent pregnancy
- It lasts for 12 weeks at a time
- There are no pills to take every day
- There is nothing to do right before sex to make it work
- No one can tell if you are using it

What do some women dislike about it?

- It causes changes in your periods
- You may have other side effects that won't go away until the shot wears off
- You have to have a shot every 12 weeks
- It may take as long as 18 months to get pregnant after you stop using it

What about the side effects of Depo-Provera?

- All women who use Depo-Provera have a change in their menstrual bleeding
- You may not know when you will have your period
- You may have spotting between periods
- You may have longer or shorter periods
- Most women stop having periods after using Depo-Provera for 12 months
-

- You may feel tired and have sore breasts and nausea, This usually goes away after two months
- Depo-Provera may make you want to eat more. Women may gain a few pounds each year. A balanced diet and exercise can help
- Some women may have headaches, feel nervous, depressed, or dizzy. Others may have a higher or lower sex drive

Are there any other problems with using Depo-Provera?

- The average woman takes 10 months to become pregnant after she stops using Depo-Provera . Some women become pregnant as early as 3 or 4 months after the last shot, while others can take as long as 18 months
- Women who use Depo-Provera for a long time may lose a small amount of calcium in their bones. Most of the calcium comes back as soon as you stop using Depo-Provera.

Can I use Depo-Provera if I breastfeed by baby?

Women who breastfeed can use Depo-Provera starting 6 weeks after childbirth,. No harmful effects have been seen in breastfed children whose mothers used the shot.

Does Depo-Provera cause cancer?

People have worried that using Depo-Provera could cause cancer. Studies have shown that, overall, women who use Depo-Provera do not have a higher sick of cancer of the breast, ovary, uterus, cervix or liver.

Some women who should not use the shot

You should not use Depo-Provera:

- If you think you might be pregnant
- If you have vaginal bleeding for no known reason
- If you have ever had a growth or tumor on your liver
- If you have ever had breast cancer
- If you have blood clots in the legs, lungs or eyes
- If you are allergic to it

If you have had other serious health problems, such as migraine headaches, depression, liver disease, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure or diabetes, you should tell your health care provider. He or she will help you decide if Depo-Provera will be safe for you to use

Depo-Provera does not protect you from AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. Use condoms when you have sex to help protect yourself from these diseases.

Adapted from Education Programs Associates for the California Department of Health Services Office of Family Planning