

Depo-Provera

What is Depo-Provera used for?

Depo-Provera is a shot used to prevent pregnancy. You need to get the shot every 3 months (4 times a year) from your healthcare provider. The shot is usually given during the first 5 days of your menstrual period.

Depo-Provera is one of the most reliable forms of birth control. For every 1000 women using this method of birth control, 3 women may get pregnant.

How does it work?

Depo-Provera is a man-made form of the female hormone progesterone. Progesterone is one of the hormones used in birth control pills. After a shot of Depo-Provera, the high level of progesterone in the body keeps the ovaries from releasing an egg for the next 3 months. If the ovaries don't release an egg, you cannot get pregnant. The hormone also causes a thickening of the mucus on the cervix and changes the lining of the uterus. These changes also help prevent pregnancy.

When you take Depo-Provera, your periods may be lighter and less painful. The symptoms of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) may not be as bothersome.

What else do I need to know about this medicine?

- Depo-Provera may increase your risk for heart disease. It may also increase your risk for stroke, blood clots, some liver problems, and possibly depression or diabetes. You and your healthcare provider should discuss the risks and benefits of taking Depo-Provera.
- Follow the directions that come with your medicine, including information about food or alcohol. Make sure you know how and when to take your medicine. Remember that you may not be protected from pregnancy if you do not get your shots on schedule.
- This medicine does not keep you from getting AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. Latex or polyurethane condoms are the only method of birth control that can protect against the HIV virus and AIDS.
- This medicine may decrease the amount of calcium in your bones. This may give you a higher risk of osteoporosis and broken bones. Ask your provider if you need preventive care for this.
- Many medicines have side effects. A side effect is a symptom or problem that is caused by the medicine. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist what side effects the medicine may cause and what you should do if you have side effects.
- Smoking while you are using this medicine increases the risk of serious side effects. Talk to your healthcare provider about ways to quit smoking.
- Keep a list of your medicines with you. List all of the prescription medicines, nonprescription medicines, supplements, natural remedies, and vitamins that

you take. Tell all healthcare providers who treat you about all of the products you are taking.

- Try to get all of your prescriptions filled at the same place. Your pharmacist can help make sure that all of your medicines are safe to take together.

If you have any questions, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information. Be sure to keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.

Developed by RelayHealth.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.