

*What to expect with*  
**Depo-Provera Shots**



*Changes in your menstrual period*

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During the first year you get Depo-Provera shots, you may have changes in your periods.

***You may notice:***

- ◆ Your cycle may not be regular, or you may not have a period at all,
- ◆ You may bleed more or less than you did before taking the shot,
- ◆ You may have spotting or bleeding between periods.

If you have a period that is very heavy or that does not stop at any time while you are using the shot, call us right away.

When you are on the shot, you may skip a period or not have a period at all. This is normal! It does not mean you are pregnant. It does mean that your ovaries are in a resting state and are not releasing an egg each month. While your body is resting, there is no need for your body to build up and shed the lining of the uterus each month.

As long as you have not delayed or missed any of your shots, you are probably not pregnant, even if your periods stop.

However, if you think you may be pregnant, call or see us right away. When you stop taking Depo-Provera shots, your cycle will come back. It may take a little time before this happens, however.

*Weight changes*

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As with birth control pills, some women gain a few pounds the first year when they take Depo-Provera shots. After the first year, any weight gain appears to depend on the person.

Some women may not gain weight while others may gain some weight. It is important to control your weight by having a good diet and regular exercise.

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## What to expect with Depo-Provera Shots

### Other changes: Thinning bones

Depo-Provera can lower the amount of calcium in your bones and may weaken your bones if taken for a long time (more than 2 years). After taking Depo-Provera for two years, your health care provider may ask you to change to another birth control method. If you want to keep taking Depo-Provera, the health department may recommend that you have your bones tested for thinning. The health department does not provide this test. When Depo-Provera is stopped, the calcium in bones begins to come back, but there may be lifelong effects. These may include brittle or broken bones, particularly later in life.

Every woman should take steps to have healthy bones. To do this, take in plenty of calcium and get plenty of exercise.

Foods that have a lot of calcium are milk, yogurt, cheese, salmon, shrimp and broccoli. Your healthcare provider may want you to take a pill with calcium in it.

Exercises that can help make your bones strong are walking, running, and climbing stairs.

### What other side effects could I have?

Like birth control pills, the Depo-Provera shot can cause you to feel changes in your body. Some of the changes you might have:

- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Nervous or sad feelings
- ◆ Upset stomach
- ◆ Sore breasts
- ◆ Dizziness
- ◆ Tired feeling

Most women do not have many problems when they take the Depo-Provera shots. If you have any questions or concerns, call and talk with us.

### What do I do if I want to get pregnant?

Taking Depo-Provera does not hurt your chances of getting pregnant later. This is true even if you stop having periods.

If you decide that you want to become pregnant, do not get any more shots.

There may be a delay in getting pregnant after using Depo-Provera. On average it may take up to 10 months to get pregnant after your last shot. This is normal.

### What do I need to know about using Depo-Provera shots?

Depo-Provera shots are a good choice for many women because it is easy to do. Just come to the office every 12 weeks (about three months) and get a shot.

**Remember:** In order for Depo-Provera shots to work, you must get your shots on time!

### **If you have concerns or questions:**

Call \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Your next visit is on \_\_\_\_\_

**Depo-Provera shots do not protect you from AIDS or other diseases you can get when you have sex. Use a latex condom to protect yourself.**