

Deciding when or even if to become a parent is one of the most important choices you will make — for you, for your partner, and for your future. Maybe you are having sex and don't want to have a baby right away. Maybe you want to learn about how to space your children in the future. Maybe you're just curious about contraception. The point is, contraceptive methods help you plan when you will become a parent. This brochure tells you about one of the methods, so you can choose the one — or two — that seem right for you.

These choices matter to both men and women. Although most contraceptive methods are used by women, men are just as involved. Contraception seems to work best when a man and woman choose a method together and use it together!

What you should know about:

DEPO-PROVERA



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Public Health and Science
Office of Population Affairs

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What is it? Depo-Provera is a long-acting form of the hormone depo-medroxyprogesterone acetate (progestin).

How does it work? Depo-Provera works in several ways. It thickens cervical mucus, which blocks sperm; it prevents ovulation; and it prevents implantation.

How is it used? Depo-Provera is injected into a woman's upper arm or buttock once every 12 weeks.

How well does it work? Depo-Provera is almost 100% effective for 12 weeks. Failure rates increase when the shot is not given on time.

Does it reduce the risk for HIV/AIDS and STDs?
No. A male latex condom should be used with Depo-Provera to reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS and STDs.

What are its main advantages? Depo-Provera lasts for 12 weeks. It does not interfere with sex. And it can be used by women who have a history of seizures (reduces seizures) and sickle-cell anemia. It also can be used while breastfeeding.

What are some possible problems? The Depo-Provera shot must be administered every 12 weeks. It can cause menstrual changes, including irregular bleeding, spotting, missed periods, or no periods. It can cause weight gain, depression, breast tenderness, headaches, and allergic reaction. These side effects can last up to 6 months after the last injection. Depo-Provera also may delay a woman's ability to become pregnant after it is discontinued. And it may cause bone density changes or bone loss and adverse effects on lipid levels in the blood.

