

North Carolina Women's Hospital **Information about Depo Provera®**

It can be hard to make decisions about birth control. You have chosen Depo Provera®. Please read this information before your first shot to make sure that you have the information you need for yourself and your family.

What Are Reasons to Choose Depo Provera®?

- Depo Provera® is a birth control method that works very well to prevent pregnancy. In fact, it is as effective as birth control pills.
- It is easy to use; you just need to get a shot every 11 to 13 weeks.
- It is a completely private birth control method.

Are there side effects with Depo Provera®?

Depo Provera® may cause side effects such as:

- changes in your period or no period at all; in fact, you may have irregular bleeding for up to a year and then not bleed at all
- weight gain
- decreased bone density. This usually goes away after stopping Depo Provera®.
- headaches
- may decrease your breast milk or prevent your milk from coming in well, especially if it is given before you leave the hospital.

Are there women who should not choose Depo Provera®?

You should **NOT** use Depo Provera if you:

- think you may be pregnant
- want to become pregnant in the next year
- have vaginal bleeding without a known reason
- have had breast cancer
- have had liver problems
- have a history of allergy to Depo Provera®

You should talk to your health care provider about the safety of Depo Provera® if you:

- had gestational diabetes in your last pregnancy
- have a history of severe depression

What else should I think about when I choose Depo Provera?

- It is very important with Depo Provera® that you get your shot on time in order for it to work well. Think ahead: Will you be able to go to your health care provider in 11 to 13 weeks to get another shot? Some women may find it hard to take time off from work or to get a ride to the clinic – a different method may work better in that case
- If you are breastfeeding, some health care providers suggest that you wait six weeks before getting the first Depo Provera® shot.

- If you have sex within one week after your first Depo Provera shot, you should protect yourself against pregnancy by another method, such as condoms.
- Depo Provera[®] does not protect you against sexually transmitted infections. The only certain protection is no sex at all. Using condoms with Depo Provera[®] can help protect against sexually transmitted infections.
- Think about the cost: One shot of Depo Provera[®] costs about the same as 3 months of birth control pills. If you are worried about cost, talk to your health care provider.

If you have any questions after reading this, ask your health care provider.

Approved by NC Women's Hospital Patient Education Committee, November 18, 2002; reviewed and approved June 19, 2007 and March 1, 2009.