

THE SHOT - DMPA

Planned Parenthood Northern California 1-925-676-0300

What is depo medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA)?

DMPA – the shot - is a birth control method made of the hormone progestin. It is like the hormone made by your body. This hormone keeps you from getting pregnant in 2 ways:

- It keeps eggs from leaving the ovaries.
- It makes cervical mucus thicker. This keeps sperm from getting to the eggs.

Before getting the shot, you need to know about the most common benefits, risks, side effects, and other choices you have. We are happy to answer any questions you have.

What are the benefits of the shot?

- There's nothing you have to do before sex to make the shot work.
- It can protect you from:
 - Cancer of the uterus
 - Heavy periods
 - Bad cramps
 - Pregnancy in the tubes
 - Anemia (iron poor blood)

How well does the shot work?

- For every 100 people who get each shot on time for a year, only 1 will get pregnant.
- For every 100 people who do not always get the shot on time, about 6 will get pregnant.

What are the risks of the shot?

- Temporary bone thinning — bone thinning increases the longer you use it. Bone growth begins again when you stop using the shot.
- A slightly greater risk of rare serious problems like heart attack and blood clots that could cause damage to your lungs, heart or brain — the risks go up if you:
 - Are older than 35
 - Have diabetes (sugar)
 - Have high cholesterol
 - Smoke
 - Have high blood pressure
 - Have had a stroke, heart attack, or angina

What are the side effects of the shot?

You may have:

- Irregular bleeding — including bleeding more days than usual, spotting between periods, or no periods. This is most common during the first year. After 12 months, about half of all people using the shot stop getting their periods.
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach) — usually clears up in 2 or 3 months
- Sore breasts — usually clears up in 2 or 3 months
- Headaches
- Weight gain — some people gain a lot of weight on the shot
- Depression
- Slight bruising where the shot was given
- A small, permanent dent in the skin where the shot was given (very rare)
- A delay of 9–10 months in getting your period back and being able to get pregnant after stopping the shot

Besides the shot, what are my other choices?

There are many other methods of birth control. We can talk about any of these options with you and help you with whatever you decide to do.

Can I use the shot?

People with certain health problems can't use the shot. Talk with your doctor or nurse about your risks and health problems. It will help you decide if the shot is right for you.

How do I take the shot?

You get the shot at the clinic about every 13 weeks. There are 2 types:

- One is injected into the muscle.
- The other is injected just under the skin. It has a lower dose of hormone.

What else do I need to know?

If you get side effects from the shot, there is no way to stop them. They may continue and you may need treatment until the shot wears off.

To protect your bones, stop smoking, limit your alcohol, get regular exercise and get extra calcium, either through your diet or by taking calcium and vitamin D.

Read the package insert that comes with the shot. The information may be different from ours. Let us know if you have questions.

The shot does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.

Your health is important to us. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us. We are happy to help you.

Call us right away at 1-800-454-9125 if you have:

- Severe depression
- Unusually heavy bleeding from the vagina
- Repeated, very bad headaches
- Pus, redness, pain for many days, or bleeding where you were given the shot
- Sudden back/jaw pain along with nausea, sweating or trouble breathing
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Achy soreness in the leg
- Trouble breathing
- Severe pain in the belly