

# Birth Control Shot Fact Sheet

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24-hour Emergency Number/Location

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## SOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❖ [Unintended Pregnancy Prevention: Contraception](#)

Food and Drug Administration

- ❖ [Birth Control Guide](#)

Office on Women's Health

- ❖ [Girlshealth.gov: Types of Birth Control](#)



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### What is the birth control shot?

The birth control shot is an injection of the hormone progestin that prevents pregnancy by keeping the ovaries from releasing eggs. Hormones are chemicals that control how different parts of your body work. The shot also works by causing the cervical mucus to thicken, which blocks sperm from meeting with and fertilizing an egg. The most commonly used injectable contraceptive is Depo-Provera, sometimes called Depo.



### How do I use it?

Your healthcare provider needs to give you the birth control shot. Each shot lasts for 12 weeks (about three months). It is important to get each shot on time, otherwise you may get pregnant.



### How do I get it?

You can get the birth control shot at a clinic or your health care provider's office. To search for a family planning clinic near you, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/opa/>

Discuss your medical history with your health care provider before using the birth control shot and let them know if you develop any side effects.

### How effective is it?

Of 100 women who use this method, 6 may get pregnant. This includes women who did not get the shot on time.



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### Advantages of the birth control shot

- ❖ The shot does not require the consent of the female's partner and is private.
- ❖ The shot is safe and works well in preventing pregnancy. Using the shot means you do not have to think about birth control when you want to have sex.
- ❖ Many women who use the birth control shot have lighter periods or no periods at all and fewer menstrual cramps.
- ❖ Women who take the shot are less likely to have cancer of the uterus and pelvic inflammatory disease (PID).



### Drawbacks of the birth control shot

- ❖ Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections.
- ❖ Requires a visit to a health care provider every 12 weeks.
- ❖ It may take up to a year after stopping the shot to become pregnant.
- ❖ Some women experience side effects such as breast tenderness, spotting or bleeding between periods, weight gain, nervousness, abdominal discomfort and/or headaches.
- ❖ Using the shot longer than two years continuously may cause thinning of a woman's bones. However, normal bone growth returns when a woman stops taking the birth control shot.



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## Quick Facts

### Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy

- ❖ Of 100 women who use this method each year, about 6 may get pregnant.
- ❖ The risk is lower in women who get the shot on time.

### STI Protection

- ❖ No

### Clinic Visit Required

- ❖ Yes, only a health care provider can give a woman the birth control shot

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