

## Fact Sheet - English

# THE CONTRACEPTIVE INJECTION - DMPA



### What Is The Contraceptive Injection (DMPA)?

DMPA stands for Depot Medroxyprogesterone Acetate. This is the contraceptive injection. The contraceptive injection available in Australia is called Depo-Provera® or Depo-Ralovera®. It is a chemical that is similar to a hormone called progesterone, which is produced by the ovaries. Each injection of DMPA protects a woman from getting pregnant for 12 weeks.



### How Does The Contraceptive Injection Work?

The contraceptive injection stops your ovaries from releasing an egg. If no egg is released, you cannot become pregnant.

### How Well Does It Work?

It is between 99% and 94% effective which means that between one and six women in every hundred who are using the contraceptive injection will become pregnant in a year.

### Who Can Use The Contraceptive Injection?

Many women can use the contraceptive injection. It can be good for women who do not want to be pregnant for quite a long time. It can be good for women who find it hard to remember to take the Pill. The contraceptive injection is safe to use if you are breastfeeding, including if your baby is less than 6 weeks old.

### Who Should Not Use The Contraceptive Injection?

Women should not use it if they could be pregnant. They should not use it if they have had some medical conditions such as breast cancer. It is also not usually recommended as a first choice for women under 18 years of age or women over 45 years because of its effect on bone density. It is important to talk to your doctor to be sure it is safe for you to use.

### Are There Any Side Effects?

Periods are often irregular with the contraceptive injection. You could have light bleeding for some weeks or your periods may stop altogether. The longer you use the injection the more likely it is that you will stop having any bleeding. This is normal. Some women may gain weight, get headaches, experience mood swings or acne while they are using the contraceptive injection. Long term users of the contraceptive injection may have a small reduction in their bone density, which appears to be reversible when the contraceptive injection is stopped. Talk to your doctor if you get any symptoms that you think might be caused by the contraceptive injection.

### How Do You Use The Contraceptive Injection?

The doctor will give you a small injection of the contraceptive injection in your buttock, or your upper arm. You usually have the injection during the first five days of your menstrual cycle (the first day of a period is day one). When you have it at this time, it prevents you from getting pregnant straight away. You can have the contraceptive injection later if there is no chance that you could be pregnant, but it will take another seven days before it is effective. You need to use another method of contraception such as condoms for those days.

It is important that you keep on having injections every 12 weeks to make sure you do not get pregnant.

[www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au) | [talkline 1300 658 886](tel:1300658886) | [bookshop](#)

clinical services & information | education & training | research | international development

Family Planning NSW is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the NSW Ministry of Health

The information in this Fact Sheet has been provided for educational purposes only. FPNPNSW has taken every care to ensure that the information is accurate and up-to-date at the time of publication. Individuals concerned about any personal reproductive or sexual health issue are encouraged to seek advice and assistance from their health care provider or visit a Family Planning Clinic. Reviewed May 2014/FPNSW 05/14

## How Can You Get The Contraceptive Injection?

You need to go to a doctor or Family Planning Clinic to get a script for the contraceptive injection. The doctor will then give you the injection.

## Is There Anything Else I Need To Know?

When women stop using the contraceptive injection, their periods often take eight months or more to return to their regular cycle. Because of this, it can also take quite a while to become pregnant after a DMPA injection.

## For Further Information

- Contact the Family Planning NSW Talkline on 1300 658 886 or go to [www.fpnsw.org.au/talkline](http://www.fpnsw.org.au/talkline)
- NRS (for deaf) 133 677
- Or visit your nearest Family Planning clinic

Reviewed: June 2014 | FPNSW 06/14

*The information in this Factsheet has been provided for educational purposes only. Family Planning NSW has taken every care to ensure that the information is accurate and up-to-date at the time of publication. Individuals concerned about any personal reproductive or sexual health issue are encouraged to seek advice and assistance from their health care provider or visit an Family Planning NSW clinic.*

[www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au) | [talkline 1300 658 886](tel:1300658886) | [bookshop](#)

clinical services & information | education & training | research | international development

Family Planning NSW is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the NSW Ministry of Health

Family Planning QLD 07 3250 0240 | Family Planning TAS 03 6273 9117 | Family Planning VIC 03 9257 0121

Family Planning WA 08 9227 6177 | Family Planning Welfare Association of NT 08 8948 0144

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT 02 6247 3077 | SHine SA 08 8300 5300