

## DEPOPROVERA

Background: FDA approved 1992; > 99% effective when used correctly  
DMPA is converted to progesterone, and causes endometrial tissue to mature to secretory state & beyond; suppresses LH, FSH.  
May cause relative estrogen deficiency

### Candidates for Depo Provera:

- Women who cannot take estrogen and want a reversible method (smokers 35 y/o and older, HTN, SLE, valvular heart disease, vascular disease)
- Women with seizure disorder, anemia, hemoglobinopathies, thromboembolic disease

### When to start Depo Provera:

- During menses or within 5 days of start of period (use barrier contraception for two weeks if given later than 5 days after onset of menses)
- 6 weeks postpartum
- Negative UPT, PAP smear current
- For women with irregular menses, including Depo users with last Depo > 14 weeks ago: 2 negative UPT's at clinic 2 weeks apart (no sex or careful barrier use during these 2 weeks)

### Subsequent Depo Provera Shots:

- Every 12 weeks
- If more than 2 weeks late, must "restart" according to above guidelines (after the 12 week interval, there is thought to be a 2-4 week "grace period" during which the patient still has contraceptive protection)

### Side Effects/Management:

1. Breakthrough Bleeding (endometrial suppression/atrophic endometrium)  
Treatment Options:
  - Premarin 1.25 mg po qday for 2 weeks
  - Estrogen dominant OCP (Demulen, ON 1/50, Brevicon, Norinyl 1+50, ON 777) for 2-3 cycles
  - Heavy bleeding: 25 mg parenteral Premarin
2. Amenorrhea (55% by 1 year of use, 80% by 5<sup>th</sup> year). Tx not necessary.
3. Weight gain/appetite change (anabolic steroid—average weight gain 5.4# in 1<sup>st</sup> year and up to 16.5# by 6<sup>th</sup> year)
  - Prospectively counsel to control food intake and increase physical activity
4. Premenstrual syndrome and personality changes (anxiety, moodiness, depression, personality shifts) difficult to manage as drugs take 6-8 months to clear
5. Lactation effect (Depo enhances milk production)
6. Hair/skin changes (rarely may cause hirsutism, acne, oily skin)

7. Delayed return of fertility
  - Depo may last 7-9 months in the body
  - Counsel patient that she should expect fertility to return after 9 months, may take up to 18 months
8. Increased risk of osteoporosis, encourage calcium intake, consider supplementation with Os Cal + D 500 mg PO BID-TID