

Progestin-only Injectables

DMPA or NET-EN



Balanced Counseling Strategy



Progestin-only Injectables

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General information:

- You get an injection every 2 or 3 months, depending on type of injectable.
- Safe for women who are breastfeeding. You may begin the method 6 weeks after giving birth.
- May cause irregular or no menstrual bleeding.
- There is a delayed return to fertility after you stop the method. It takes about 4 months longer than with most other methods.
- Safe for a woman with HIV/AIDS, even if she takes antiretroviral (ARV) medicines.
- Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.

Effectiveness for pregnancy prevention: Pregnancy rate in first year of use is:

- Correct use (no missed or late injections) — 1 pregnancy per 100 women (1%)
- Typical use (some missed or late injections) — 3 pregnancies per 100 women (3%)

How method works:

- Progestin-only injectables contain the hormone progestin. Progestin makes the mucus around the cervix thick. This stops the sperm from meeting the egg.
- This hormone also stops the release of eggs from the ovaries (ovulation).
- DMPA and NET-EN are types of injectables.
- If using DMPA, you get an injection once every 3 months (90 days).
- If using NET-EN, you get an injection once every 2 months (60 days).

Important facts:

- Provide long-term pregnancy prevention. Method is reversible.
- Can be stopped at any time, either to switch to another method or to get pregnant.
- Private. No one can tell you are using an injectable.
- Do not interfere with sex.
- Do not protect against STI, including HIV.
- Use condoms (male or female) if you feel at risk of getting STIs, including HIV.

Method not advised if you:

- Are breastfeeding an infant less than 6 weeks of age.
- Have very high blood pressure.
- Have certain uncommon serious diseases of the heart, blood vessels or liver, or breast cancer. Discuss with your provider.
- Take medications for seizures or take rifampicin.

Side effects:

- In the beginning, you may have irregular bleeding, prolonged bleeding, or frequent bleeding. Later on there is no monthly bleeding.
- Menstrual changes do not stop until the injection wears off (2-3 months or more).
- Some women have weight gain, headaches, dizziness, and other side effects.
- These are not signs of illness.
- Not all women have these side effects.

Health benefits:

- Help prevent cancer of the lining of the uterus. Also help prevent uterine fibroids.
- May help protect against pelvic inflammatory disease (PID).
- May help prevent iron deficiency anemia.
- Reduce symptoms of endometriosis (pelvic pain, irregular bleeding).

How to use:

- Go to a provider to get an injection.
- Get your injections every 3 months (DMPA) or 2 months (NET-EN). If you do not get your injection, you can get pregnant if you have sex.
- Even if you are late, come back. You may still be able to get your injection.
- If you switch to another brand of injectable, use this brochure on how to use the method.

Follow-up:

For DMPA users:

- Return every 3 months or 13 weeks to get the next injection.
- Try to come on time. You may come up to 4 weeks early or 4 weeks late and get an injection. No matter how late you are, come back for your next injection.
- If you are more than 4 weeks late, abstain from sex or use condoms until you can get an injection.

For NET-EN:

- Return every 2 months or 9 weeks to get the next injection.
- Try to come on time. You may come up to 2 weeks early or 2 weeks late and get an injection. No matter how late you are, come back for your next injection.
- If you are more than 2 weeks late, abstain from sex or use condoms until you can get an injection.

Return to the health care facility any time if:

- You have any questions or problems.
- You need another injection.
- You develop any health problems.
- You are late for your injection, had sex in the past 5 days, and want to avoid pregnancy. You can take emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs).
- You think you may be pregnant.