

# Information On Progestogen-only Injectable Contraceptives (Depo-Provera)



## Progestogen-only injectable

It is a synthetic hormone (progestogen). It prevents pregnancy by preventing the release of eggs from the ovaries, thickening the cervical mucus and creating a hostile environment for fertilisation.

### • Regular Injection

- The injection should be given every 12 weeks.
- If you cannot attend as scheduled, please return to the Maternal and Child Health Centre within 14 days before the due date. Please do not delay your injection.

## Advantages

- It is a highly effective method. The pregnancy rate is less than 1% per year.
- It is convenient for those who do not wish to take a pill daily or use a condom every time when having sex.
- It is suitable for breastfeeding mothers since it does not affect the volume or quality of breast milk, and the health of the children.
- It does not contain oestrogen, and is suitable for women who cannot use contraceptive methods containing oestrogen.

## Side Effects

• Headaches, dizziness, breast tenderness are the most common side effects at the initial period of use and usually subside within the first few months.

• For some users, there is weight gain of about 1-5lb (kg) per year on average.

• Majority of the women would have irregular periods, diminished menstrual flow or amenorrhoea which is related to the hormonal effect of the progestogen. It is normal and as there is no need to worry. If you have persistent heavy and prolonged menstruation after the injection, please return to the MCHC for assessment.

• Generally, it takes 6 to 9 months to resume normal ovulation following discontinuation of the Progestogen only injectable. Therefore, it takes some time for fertility to return to normal after stopping the injection.

• Please seek medical assessment as soon as possible if you have the following symptoms such as generalised rash, bleeding, headaches, weakness or tingling/numbing sensation affecting one side or one part of the body, joint/limb, abdominal pain, calf pain or severe chest pain, and tell your doctor you are using the Progestogen only injectable.



## Effect on Bone Mineral Density

Various studies showed that the use of Progesterone-only injectable for more than two years is associated with a small reduction in bone mineral density. After discontinuation, the bone mineral density recovers in women aged 35 to 65. There is no evidence that the use of Progesterone-only injectable increases the risk of bone fractures.

✪ For more information, please refer to  
"Osteoporosis in women" leaflet published  
by our service.

## The more than two years

If you have used Progesterone-only injectable for more than **two years**, our medical or nursing staff will assess your health conditions (such as whether you have heart disease, stroke, thromboembolic disease, hypertension, migraine, diabetes mellitus, liver disease, cancers, diseases that require long-term medication and regular follow-up) before advising whether you are suitable to continue using the Progesterone-only injectable.



Family Health Service

Website: [www.fhs.gov.lk](http://www.fhs.gov.lk)

24-hour information hotline: 21122600