**THE FACTS**

**What is Depo-Provera?**
Depo-Provera is an injection containing the hormone depo-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA), which is similar to the progesterone made by a woman’s ovaries. It does not contain estrogen. Like other hormonal birth control methods including the pill, DMPA causes a resting state in your ovaries. Since your ovaries do not release an egg each month, you cannot get pregnant. DMPA is injected into the buttock or upper arm every 13 weeks.

**Effectiveness of Depo-Provera:**
DMPA is one of the most effective reversible methods of birth control. It is 97 – 99% effective, making it one of the most reliable methods of birth control. You only need to get your injection once every 3 months (13 weeks).

**How this shot is used:**
After reviewing your medical and gynecological history and a gynecological exam within the past year, the nurse will inject the hormone into your buttocrk or arm. Protection against pregnancy is immediate if you get DMPA during the first five days of your period. Otherwise, use an additional method of contraception for the first 7 days.

**Do not have an injection if there is a chance that you are pregnant.** Be sure to tell the nurse if you think there is any chance that you are.

A woman must receive this shot every 3 months. There is no way to stop the effects of the DMPA during this time so side effects may continue until the shot wears off (12 – 14 weeks). If you wish to become pregnant, it can take 3-18 months after your last shot. It is important to get your injections on time. It is safe to have your injection several weeks early if your 3 month date is not convenient. If you wait longer than 13 weeks, you will no longer be protected. Use another reliable form of birth control or don’t engage in sexual activity until you get your injection.

**Advantages of Depo-Provera:**
- Nothing to put into place before intercourse
- Effective for 3 months
- No medicine to take every day
- Helps prevent cancer of the uterus lining
- Can be used by women who cannot take estrogen

**Possible disadvantages of Depo-Provera:**
- Irregular bleeding is the most common side effect
- Periods become fewer and lighter for most women. They may stop altogether. It can take up to a year for your period to start again after a woman stops using DMPA.
- Some women will have longer and heavier periods
- Some women may have more light spotting and break-through bleeding

**Less common side effects:**
- Headaches
- Change of appetite
- Skin rash
- Nausea
- Weight gain
- Spotty darkening of skin
- Dizziness
- Hair loss
- Change in sex drive
- Sore Breasts
- Nervousness
- Depression
- Increased hair on face/body

**Depo-Provera should NOT be used if:**
- You have unexplained vaginal bleeding
- You might be pregnant
- You have had breast cancer
- You are taking medicine for Cushing’s Syndrome
- You cannot put up with irregular bleeding or loss of your period
- You want to become pregnant within 18 months

**Warning Signs**
Serious problems are rare. Tell your nurse immediately if you have any of the following:

- Severe pain in the stomach or abdomen, unusually heavy or prolonged vaginal bleeding, a new lump in your breast, major depression or yellowing of the skin or eyes.

**Depo-Provera is indicated for the prevention of pregnancy and does NOT prevent against HIV or Sexually Transmitted Diseases.** In the rare case that pregnancy occurs during the use of DMPA, there is an increased chance that the pregnancy will be ectopic. Ectopic pregnancies are life threatening. They usually are eliminated medically or removed with surgery. Contact your doctor immediately if you have any symptoms of pregnancy, including: irregular bleeding, severe lower abdominal pain, nausea and breast tenderness.

Rev 2/8/2011
I wish to receive the Depo-Provera injections from the University Health Center. I have read the fact sheet provided to me on the Depo-Provera injections. I understand the risks and benefits and possible side effects associated with these injections. I have had an opportunity to ask questions which have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I must furnish the medication and the injection fee is $5.00 for each visit which includes a urine pregnancy test.

[ ] Fact Sheet reviewed
[ ] Calendar given, next due date highlighted
[ ] STD and Hepatitis B hand-outs given
[ ] Need appointment for new prescription

Urine Pregnancy Test Results ________________________

I have read and understand the fact sheet on Depo-Provera Injections. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

Name: ________________________________  W#: ________________________________
D.O.B: ____________________________  Phone #: ________________________________
Patient Signature: ________________________________  Date: ________________________________
Nurse Signature: ________________________________

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