**How to prescribe contraceptive injections**

A quick guide to prescribing Medoxyprogesterone acetate 150g

**How to use**

* The injection can be given any time after birth and within the first 21 days for effective contraception
* The Depo Provera injection comes in a prefilled syringe.
* Shake vigorously before administration.
* Give as a deep IM injection into the gluteal (preferred) or deltoid muscle.
* Ensure you give the full content of syringe.

**Useful links.**

<https://www.fsrh.org/standards-and-guidance/documents/cec-ceu-guidance-injectables-dec-2014/>

<https://www.fsrh.org/standards-and-guidance/documents/contraception-after-pregnancy-guideline-january-2017/>

**Benefits**

* Lasts for 14 weeks
* Safe with breastfeeding
* Can cause amenorrhoea or lighter periods
* Don’t need to remember to take a pill

**Side effects**

* Irregular bleeding.
* Weight change - higher chance in <18 or BMI >30
* Breast tenderness.
* Changes in mood, alopecia, acne, headache but little evidence of causality.

Heavy and irregular bleeding is common if given soon after giving birth.

**Do not prescribe if**

**the woman…**

* Has had ischaemic heart disease, vascular disease or a stroke/TIA or has multiple cardiovascular risk factors (smoking, diabetes, hypertension).
* Has previous or current breast cancer.
* Has severe cirrhosis or hepatocellular adenoma or carcinoma.
* Acute porphyria
* Seek medical advice in under 18-year olds and those with risk factors for osteoporosis (smoking, steroid use, eating disorder, low BMI, FHx, absorption issues.)

If you are unsure about if the injection is safe to prescribe, please contact Solent Sexual Health on 03003002016 for advice.

**Counselling points**

Fertility can return as early as 3 weeks after giving birth, a contraceptive injection before this gives immediate contraception.

It is recommended that women wait for 1 year before becoming pregnant again.

The injection works by preventing ovulation and thickens cervical mucus/thins the uterine lining – reducing the chance of fertilisation and implantation.

The contraception injection is 99% effective if used correctly 94% with typical use.

Women should contact their GP or Sexual Health services for repeat doses.

**Patient Information Leaflet**

<https://www.sexwise.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource/2021-02/contraceptive-injections-your-guide-Feb-21_0.pdf>

**Risks**

* Small risk of reduced bone mineral density due to lower oestrogen levels. Spontaneously resolves when the injections are stopped.
* Fertility may take up to a year to return-average return to fertility 5.5 months.
* Weak association with increased breast cancer risk.

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