Injectable contraceptive is a progestin-only dose of depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA), a progestin that mimics the natural progesterone hormone. Two DMPA formulas exist: One is administered into the muscle and one is administered into the tissue layer under the skin. The short-term reversible contraceptive method is effective for about three months. The injectable should be administered by a trained provider every three months to maintain protection from unintended pregnancies. The progestin-only injectable does not contain estrogen.

**MECHANISM OF ACTION**

Injectable contraceptives work by inhibiting ovulation. Progestin is slowly released into the blood which prevents the ovaries from releasing an egg and thickens the cervical mucus, inhibiting sperm from entering the uterus. Injectable contraceptives also thin the endometrium lining shortly after the first injection, however, likelihood of fertilization is extremely low due to the main mechanism of action. Injectables do not disrupt an existing pregnancy.

**METHOD EFFECTIVENESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implant</td>
<td>99.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male sterilization</td>
<td>99.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hormonal IUD</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female sterilization</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper IUD</td>
<td>99.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pill</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male condom</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No method</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Method effectiveness is the percent of women NOT experiencing pregnancy within the first year of use of each method.

**It’s a common misconception that injectables:**

- **...AFFECT BONE HEALTH**
  
  Research shows use is associated with decreased bone mass density with loss slowing after the first two years of use. Bone mass density returns after discontinuation.

- **...ARE NOT SAFE FOR YOUTH**
  
  The World Health Organization deems contraception appropriate for youth and states no medical reason to deny contraception based solely on age.

- **...CAUSE INFERTILITY**
  
  Research shows it takes longer to conceive after discontinuation of injectables than other methods. After 18 months post-removal, 90% of users return to fertility.

- **...ARE NOT SAFE FOR BREASTFEEDING**
  
  Research shows injectables do not affect milk production and are safe for use six weeks after childbirth.

**Injectable Use in South Asia**

Approximately 28 million women are using injectables in South Asia. If injectables were banned in the Philippines, approximately 623,000 women would be at risk of an unintended pregnancy if they chose no other method.

**NUMBER OF WOMEN USING INJECTABLES (IN THOUSANDS)**

- Less than 100
- 100-1,000
- 1,000-5,000
- More than 5,000
INJECTABLE CONTRACEPTIVE

SOURCES


Mishell, “Pharmacokinetics of Depot Medroxyprogesterone Acetate Contraception.”


**Method Effectiveness**

**Note:** Estimates are based on a typical couple’s use of the method. Estimates for perfect use of the method are higher.


**Number of Women Using Injectables**