

## What are the side effects?

The injection cannot be removed from your body and any side effects may continue for 3 months or longer. Side effects include the following:

### Bleeding patterns

All women experience a change in bleeding patterns. With continued use the majority of women stop having periods. Some women have irregular bleeding or spotting. Heavy or continuous bleeding rarely occurs.

### Weight gain

You may experience weight gain as the injection may increase your appetite.

### Headaches, breast pain and mood changes

These symptoms can occur. They may go away after the initial few weeks, but if persistent seek medical advice.

## Who should NOT use the injection?

Women who are pregnant or want to get pregnant within the next twelve to eighteen months, women with unexplained vaginal bleeding or women with severe liver disease should not use the injection.

## Are you at risk of STIs?

The injection does not protect you against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Practise safer sex. Condoms reduce the risk of STIs.

## SHine SA contact details

### East/West Primary Health Care Team

GP Plus Health Care Centre  
64c Woodville Road, Woodville  
Postal address: PO Box 76 Woodville SA 5011  
Tel: 8300 5300  
Clinic appointments: 8300 5301

### Northern Primary Health Care Team

43 Peachey Road, Davoren Park  
Postal address: PO Box 719 Davoren Park SA 5113  
Tel: 8256 0700

### Southern Primary Health Care Team

19-23 Beach Road, Christies Beach  
Postal address: PO Box 330 Christies Beach SA 5165  
Tel: 8186 8600

### Workforce Development & Resources

64c Woodville Road, Woodville  
Postal address: PO Box 76 Woodville SA 5011  
Tel: 8300 5317  
Email: SHineSACourses@health.sa.gov.au

### Library & Resource Centre

64c Woodville Road, Woodville  
Postal address: PO Box 76 Woodville SA 5011  
Tel: 8300 5312  
Email: SHineSALibrary@health.sa.gov.au

### Sexual Healthline

Available 9 am – 1 pm, Monday – Friday  
Tel: 1300 883 793  
Country callers (toll free): 1800 188 171  
Email: sexualhealthhotline@health.sa.gov.au

### Website

[www.shinesa.org.au](http://www.shinesa.org.au)

National Relay Service: [www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au)  
133 677 (TTY/Voice) 1300 555 727 (Speak & Listen)

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# Injectable contraception



safety, pleasure, respect

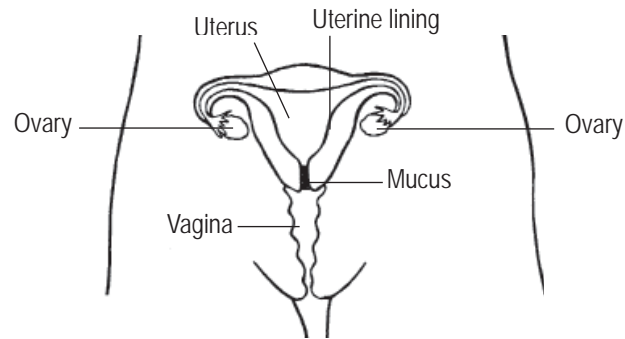
## What is the injectable contraception?

It's a form of contraception that is injected into a muscle (usually buttock or upper arm) to stop pregnancy by releasing progestogen into the body.

## How does it work?

Progestogen is a hormone which works by:

- stopping the release of an egg by the ovary (ovulation)
- making the mucus (sticky fluid) at the opening of the uterus thicker so sperm can't get through
- changing the lining of the uterus so a fertilised egg can't take hold



## How effective is it?

It's a very effective method of contraception (99.7%).

The brands available in Australia are:

- Depo-Provera
- Depo-Ralovera

## How do I get the injection?

You need to make an appointment with your local doctor, SHine SA or The Second Story to discuss this method and get a prescription. Once you have your prescription filled you need to return to the clinic to get the injection.

## When can it be given?

Injectable contraception should not be used if there is any risk of you currently being pregnant.

It can be given after having a baby, at 6 weeks if fully breastfeeding, or 3 weeks if not.

## When does it start working?

It's immediately effective when injected:

- during the first 5 days of a period where day one is the first day of bleeding
- while covered by other forms of hormonal contraception, e.g. the Pill, Implant etc.
- up to 7 days after having an abortion or miscarriage

The injection is effective after 7 days if it is given at any other time in the menstrual cycle. Other contraceptive measures such as condoms should be used during this time.

## How long does it last?

It is effective as a contraceptive for 3 months. It needs to be given regularly at 3-monthly intervals to maintain effectiveness. If you are late in getting your next injection you will need to use a condom until you get the injection.

## When will I be fertile again?

The hormone may persist in the body for more than 3 months after the last injection. This can affect menstrual cycles and delay the return of fertility. You can tell when it is out of your body because your periods will return to normal. This can take several months but you can get pregnant before your period returns, so continue to use other contraception as needed. Most women will be fertile within 18 months and there is no permanent effect on fertility.

## What does it cost?

On prescription it's about \$20 or if you have a Health Care Card it's about \$5. There may be an extra charge for your doctor appointments.

## Who could use injectable contraception?

It's suitable for women who:

- want a safe and very effective method of avoiding pregnancy and prefer it to other contraceptive methods
- don't mind having no periods
- are unable to use the Pill or vaginal ring because they have problems taking the hormone oestrogen
- find it difficult to remember to take a daily pill
- are breastfeeding
- have certain medical conditions and may benefit from using it (discuss with your doctor)

There have been some concerns with the way injectable contraception may affect bone density. The World Health Organization recommends that there should be no restriction on the use of injectable contraception or how long it is used for among women aged 18 to 45.

With adolescents their bones are still developing until the age of 18. We are unsure about how the injectable contraception will affect bone mass in the long term. It may be used after other methods have been discussed and considered to be unsuitable or unacceptable.

With women over 45 there are concerns that they may not regain their bone mass before menopause.

However, for most women in these groups, the benefits of using this contraception still outweigh the risks.