

What is it?

Depot medroxyprogesterone Acetate Subcutaneous (DMPA SC) injectable suspension (104 mg/0.65 mL) in a single dose prefilled syringe package with a 26-gauge X 3/8 inch Terumo SurGuard™ needle with a needle-locking mechanism designed to prevent needlestick.

Why Offer it to Patients?

- It can be administered without visiting a health care setting, which reduces access barriers and increases autonomy and privacy.
- It can be less painful due to injecting a smaller volume with a smaller needle.
- Infrequent dosing (same schedule as intramuscular administration), only four injections are needed per year.
- The product is available for pickup or delivery (e.g., health center, pharmacy, or via mail).
- Patients find that it gets easier to administer over time.

Who is Eligible?

Healthy individuals of all ages, including adolescents, can use DMPA SC without an exam or tests prior to initiating, although a recorded weight/BMI may help monitor weight gain. The provider should be reasonably certain the individual is not pregnant prior to prescribing.

What are the Definite (Category 4) and Relative (Category 3) Contraindications?

See US 2016 MEC

- Known or suspected malignancy of the breast (current breast cancer is the only category 4 contraindication).
- Multiple risk factors for atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease.
- History of stroke
- Hypertension with vascular disease or systolic ≥ 160 mm Hg or diastolic ≥ 100 mm Hg.
- Current or history of ischemic heart disease.
- Systemic lupus erythematosus with positive or unknown antiphospholipid antibodies or the initiation of DMPA SC with severe thrombocytopenia
- Diabetes with nephropathy, retinopathy, neuropathy, or other vascular disease
- Diabetes of more than 20 years
- Liver tumors or severe cirrhosis
- Known hypersensitivity to medroxyprogesterone acetate or any of the ingredients in DMPA SC
- Undiagnosed vaginal bleeding

What About...?

- **Breastfeeding** – DMPA SC can be initiated immediately after delivery
- **Obesity** – There is no recommendation against using DMPA SC in obese individuals

What Should You Tell Patients?

- Discuss risks, benefits, and common side effects, including menstrual changes and low bone density warnings (per the prescribing information; current evidence suggests that recovery of BMD occurs after discontinuation and there are no high-quality data as to whether DMPA affects fracture risk in adolescents or adults later in life).
- Explain instructions on the use and storage of the method:

- ∴ Store at room temperature, do not refrigerate or leave in the heat (manufacturer recommends storing at controlled room temperature (68 to 77 degrees Fahrenheit).

- ∴ How to “Quick Start” the method and the use of a backup method, if applicable.

- ∴ Procedures for injection, may reference videos or injection diagram images.

- ∴ Areas for injection - anterior thighs and abdomen.

- ∴ Resources/information for disposing of used syringes (for information specific to your state, call Safe Needle Disposal at 1-800-643-1643 or e-mail info@safeneedledisposal.org).

- ∴ Need for repeat injection every 13 weeks (although, have 2-week grace period).

- ∴ Use condoms for protection against sexually transmitted infections (STI) and HIV.

Additional Resources

- [A Toolkit for the Self-Administration of Subcutaneous Depot Medroxyprogesterone Acetate](#)
- [Innovating Education in Reproductive Health Video About How to Self-inject](#)
- [Patient Resources About How to Self-inject DMPA SC](#)
- [RHAP Guidelines for DMPA-SC Self-injection, in Multiple Languages Including English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Hindi, Simple and Traditional Chinese](#)
- [UCLA/Harbourview Video About How to Self-inject](#)
- [Harbor-UCLA OBGYN YouTube Channel](#)
- [Planned Parenthood Texas Video](#)
 - ∴ [Spanish Version](#)
- [Planned Parenthood Greater Texas Written Patient Guidelines](#)
 - ∴ [Spanish Version](#)
- [Safe Needle Disposal](#)
- [Tri-County Health Department](#)

Patients may also benefit from resources to help remind them when to administer their follow-up injections, such as:
- [Bedsider, Birth Control Reminder App](#)
- [Reproductive Health Access Project, Progestin Injection 15-week Cycle CalendarW](#)