MSK Kids

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Medroxyprogesterone

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Depo-Provera; Depo-SubQ Provera 104; Provera

Brand Names: Canada

Depo-Provera; Provera

Warning

Birth control and endometriosis pain:

- Using this drug for birth control or endometriosis pain may cause bone loss. Bone loss is greater the longer the drug is used and may not go back to normal. It is not known what the effects will be on bones when used in teenagers and young adults. Do not use this drug for longer than 2 years unless other options will not work or cannot be used.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to prevent pregnancy.
- It is used to treat pain caused by endometriosis.
- It is used to treat uterine bleeding due to hormonal imbalance.
- It is used to treat people who do not have a monthly period cycle.

- If your child has been given this drug for some other reason, talk with the doctor about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has had any of these health problems: Bleeding disorder; blood clots or risk of having a blood clot; breast cancer or other cancer; liver disease; heart attack; stroke; or tumor where estrogen or progesterone make it grow.
- If your child has unexplained vaginal bleeding.
- If your child has not started having menstrual periods.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Do not give this drug to your child during pregnancy.
- Talk with the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby or plans to breast-feed a baby.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists. This drug may need to be stopped before certain types of surgery as the doctor has told you. If this drug is stopped, the doctor will tell you when to start giving this drug again after your child's surgery or procedure.
- Blood clots have happened with this drug. These clots have included heart attack, stroke, and clots in the leg, lung, or eye. Sometimes blood clots can be deadly. Tell your child's doctor if your child has ever had a blood clot.
- Talk with the doctor if your child will need to be still for long periods of time like long trips, bedrest after surgery, or illness. Not moving for long periods may raise the chance of blood clots.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your child's blood sugar closely.
- High triglyceride levels have happened with this drug. Tell your child's doctor if your child has ever had high triglyceride levels.
- Have your child's blood work and bone density checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- Give calcium and vitamin D as you were told by your child's doctor.
- There may be a higher chance of breast cancer.
- Be sure your child has regular breast exams and gynecology check-ups. Your child will also need to do breast self-exams as the doctor has told you.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- This drug may cause dark patches of skin on your child's face. Avoid lots of sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and dress your child in clothing and eyewear that protects from the sun.

All injection products:

- If your child will be trying to get pregnant, it may take some time after the last dose of this drug to get pregnant. Talk with the doctor.

Birth control and endometriosis pain:

- If your child is of childbearing age, a pregnancy test will need to be done before starting this drug to make sure your child is not pregnant.
- If your child gets pregnant or has severe stomach pain while using this drug, call the doctor right away. The chance of pregnancy outside of the uterus (ectopic pregnancy) may be higher with this drug.

Birth control:

- This drug does not stop the spread of diseases like HIV or hepatitis that are passed through having sex. Be sure your child does not have any kind of sex without using a latex or polyurethane condom.
- Certain drugs or herbal products could cause this drug to not work as well. Be sure your child's doctor and pharmacist know about all of your child's drugs.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.

- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Sudden, severe headache or throwing up.
- Eyesight changes or loss, bulging eyes, or change in how contact lenses feel.
- A lump in the breast, breast pain or soreness, or nipple discharge.
- Vaginal itching or discharge.
- Vaginal bleeding that is not normal.
- Depression or other mood changes.
- Seizures.
- This drug may cause your child to swell or keep fluid in the body. Tell your child's doctor if swelling, weight gain, or trouble breathing happens after this drug is given.
- Call the doctor right away if your child has signs of a blood clot like chest pain or pressure; coughing up blood; shortness of breath; swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm; or trouble speaking or swallowing.
- This drug may raise the risk of a type of brain tumor (meningioma). Call the doctor right away if your child has a change in eyesight, hearing, or smell; seizures; headache that is worse in the morning; mood changes; or weakness in the arms or legs.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

All products:

- Weight gain or loss.
- Headache.
- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Bloating.
- Pimples (acne).
- Hair loss.
- Hair growth.
- Enlarged breasts.
- Tender breasts.
- Vaginal bleeding or spotting.
- Stomach pain.
- Trouble sleeping.

If your child has menstrual periods:

- No period or other period (menstrual) changes.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- Change in sex interest.

Injection (subcutaneous):

- Skin reactions where the injection is given. This includes lumps, skin dimples, or pain. Rarely, scarring and change in skin color have happened. Call the doctor if your child has skin swelling where the injection was given or if the skin is hot, has pus, or looks bruised 1 or more days after the injection.

All other injection products:

- Irritation where the shot is given.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

Tablets:

- To gain the most benefit, do not miss giving your child doses.

Injection:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle or into the fatty part of the skin.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

Tablets:

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

All injection products:

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

Tablets:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

All injection products:

- Most of the time, this drug will be given in a hospital or doctor's office. If stored at home, follow how to store as you were told by the doctor.

All products:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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