Hi Alice,

I have been on the Depo shot now for a year and I am supposed to have another shot September 6th, but my husband and I want to have another baby. How long should it take for me to get pregnant?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Since the Depo-Provera shot is given at three-month intervals, planning ahead is indeed important. Props to you for looking ahead! Here’s the scoop: Although it’s possible for fertility to resume three months after the last injection, it takes the average woman about nine months to become pregnant after her last Depo-Provera shot (also known simply as the shot? or ?Depo?). After stopping the shot, more than 90 percent of women are able to become pregnant within two years. As you and your husband embark upon your baby-making adventure, forgoing your September shot would be the first step on the road towards another bundle of joy.

In case you want to use Depo at some point in the future ? after the birth of your child, for instance ? you may want to keep the following in mind:

- If you don’t plan on breastfeeding, you can receive an injection within five days of giving birth.
- If you do decide to breastfeed, the general recommendation is to wait six weeks after the birth of your child until you get another shot. Even though the breast milk of women who are on the shot has been shown to be normal in quantity and quality, trace amounts of the drug found in the Depo shot can be found in breast milk. Studies have shown no adverse effects to children exposed to Depo through their mother’s milk. Nevertheless, as a precaution, experts suggest waiting six weeks before resuming Depo.
If you have other questions or concerns about birth control, getting pregnant, or women’s health in general, you may want to speak to a women’s health care practitioner. Columbia students at the Morningside campus can make an appointment with Columbia Medical Services [3] by using Open Communicator [4]. Students at the Medical Center can schedule an appointment with the Student Health Service [5] or the Center for Student Wellness [6].

Happy baby-making,

Alice!

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