An overview of subcutaneous DMPA: A new type of injectable contraception that expands access and options

A new type of injectable contraception is transforming the way women and adolescent girls access and use family planning. **Subcutaneous DMPA, or DMPA-SC,** is an innovative product that makes injections simpler. Because DMPA-SC is easy to use, any trained person can administer it, including community health workers, pharmacists, and even women themselves.

As governments work to ensure a wide variety of contraceptives is available in their country, they should consider how offering DMPA-SC can address unmet need and increase access through a range of delivery channels.

**Benefiting users, providers, and health systems**

- **99 percent effective** at preventing unintended pregnancy when given correctly and on time every three months.
- **Discreet contraception** for women and adolescent girls.
- **Prefilled** and ready to inject.
- **Small and light.**
- **Simple to inject** due to short needle.
- **Stable at room temperature** (15°C to 30°C).
- **Three-year shelf life.**
- **Simplified logistics**—no need to match vial with syringe and needle, easier to manage the all-in-one product and less bulky than DMPA-IM.
- **Easy to deliver** through clinics, community-based distribution, pharmacies, and drug shops.

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The term “subcutaneous DMPA”: What you need to know

Subcutaneous DMPA is a general term used to describe an injectable contraceptive that is administered under the skin. Traditional DMPA is injected into the muscle, which generally requires more training and skill.

Sayana® Press,* manufactured by Pfizer Inc., is the brand name of the subcutaneous DMPA product available today in most countries. This “all-in-one” product combines the contraceptive drug and needle into a single device. Other versions of subcutaneous DMPA products may become available in the future.

The information in this overview is specific to Sayana Press.

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*Sayana Press is a registered trademark of Pfizer Inc.

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*DMPA stands for depot medroxyprogesterone acetate.
Empowering women and driving outcomes

- Product is **registered for self-injection** in more than 50 countries, including the United Kingdom, several European countries, and more than 20 Family Planning (FP) 2020 countries.*

- **The World Health Organization (WHO) has made a strong recommendation for self-injection**, stating that it should be made available as an additional approach to deliver injectable contraception and for self-care.

- Evidence from Uganda and Senegal indicates **self-injection in sub-Saharan Africa is feasible and acceptable.**

- Recent results from four different countries show that **women who self-inject DMPA-SC continue using injectable contraception longer** than those who receive injections from providers—meaning fewer unintended pregnancies.

- Data from Senegal and Uganda demonstrate that, compared to provider-administered DMPA-IM, **self-injection of DMPA-SC is not just cost-effective but cost saving** when accounting for costs to both women and health systems.

Taking off around the world

- Being piloted, introduced, or scaled up in more than **30 FP2020 countries.**

- **Approved by regulatory agencies in nearly 60 countries worldwide**, including in the European Union.

- **Offered at US$0.85 per dose for qualified purchasers†**—for example, ministries of health and donors—in FP2020 countries.

†This pricing reflects a six-year agreement. During the six years (2017–2022), the price is guaranteed at US$0.85. After the agreement, Pfizer Inc. is committed to ensuring the product continues to be available.
**How is DMPA-SC different from DMPA-IM?**

**DMPA-SC** (Sayana Press)

- Comes in a prefilled, “all-in-one” injection system.
- Is injected under the skin.
- Has lower dose of DMPA (104 mg).
- Has 2.5-centimeter needle.
- Can be administered by clinic providers, community health workers, pharmacists, or by women themselves where allowed.
- Is currently available to qualified purchasers for US$0.85 per dose.

**DMPA-IM** (Depo-Provera®* and generic options)

- Comes in a vial with a separate syringe.
- Is injected into the muscle.
- Has higher dose of DMPA (150 mg).
- Has 3.8-centimeter needle.
- Typically administered by providers, but can be administered by community health workers and pharmacists where allowed.
- Is currently available for about US$0.70–0.80 per dose.

*Depo-Provera is a registered trademark of Pfizer Inc.

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**What do DMPA-SC and DMPA-IM have in common?**

- Safe and highly effective at preventing unintended pregnancy.
- Delivered every three months.
- Do not protect from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. (For more information, please see the tool, “DMPA and HIV: What advocates need to know.”)
- Comparable in regard to side effects.
- Based on its lower dose, DMPA-SC is expected to have a side-effect profile that is similar to or better than that of DMPA-IM. Some women may experience side effects with either DMPA product, such as menstrual bleeding irregularities, headaches, weight gain, and injection-site reactions, including mild pain or inflammation.