The Ridings Medical Group
Caring for our community

Important Information About Your Contraceptive Injection

To all patients using Depo-Provera or Sayana Press

This is an annual safety update for our patients who are using a contraceptive injection containing medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA), such as Depo-Provera or Sayana Press.

These injections are a highly effective method of contraception. However, we want to inform you about recent research regarding a rare potential side effect, so you can make an informed decision about your ongoing care.

What is the new evidence?

A large study published in the British Medical Journal (2024) identified a possible link between the long-term use of medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA) and a rare type of tumour called a meningioma.

A meningioma is a tumour that develops in the protective layers surrounding the brain and spinal cord. Most meningiomas are non-cancerous (benign), slow-growing, and treatable.

The study showed that women who used these contraceptive injections continuously for one year or more had a small increased risk of requiring surgery for a meningioma compared to those who had not used the medication.

What does this mean for me?

The overall risk remains very small. The study found that:

- For women **not using** the injection, approximately 4 in every 100,000 required surgery for a meningioma each year (a percentage risk of 0.004%).
- For women **using** the injection, approximately 22 in every 100,000 required surgery for a meningioma each year (a percentage risk of 0.02%).

Because the absolute risk is so small, the contraceptive injection is considered a safe and available option for most patients.

Updated National Advice

Following this evidence, the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) issued updated guidance:

- The injection carries a small increased risk of meningioma, particularly with prolonged use over several years.
- It should **not** be used by anyone who currently has, or has previously had, a meningioma.

- If a patient is diagnosed with a meningioma while using the injection, treatment will be stopped.

Symptoms to look out for

Meningiomas can sometimes cause symptoms by pressing on nearby nerves or areas of the brain. Please seek medical advice from the surgery if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Persistent or worsening headaches
- Changes in your eyesight or vision
- Hearing loss or ringing in your ears (tinnitus)
- Loss of your sense of smell
- Memory loss, difficulty concentrating, confusion, or personality changes
- Seizures (fits)
- Weakness, numbness, or clumsiness affecting an arm or leg

If these symptoms are severe or sudden, seek urgent medical attention.

What are the alternative options?

If you are concerned about this risk, there are other effective contraceptive methods that have no established link to meningiomas:

- **Progestogen-Only Pill (POP):** A daily tablet (e.g., desogestrel).
- **Hormonal Coil (IUS):** Such as Mirena, Levosert, Kyleena, or Jaydess.
- **Copper Coil (IUD):** A hormone-free, long-lasting device.

Making your decision

Choosing your contraception is a personal decision. For most patients, the benefits of the injection continue to outweigh the risks.

- **If you wish to continue your injection:** We will support your choice and continue to review your treatment regularly. You do not need a routine brain scan before continuing treatment.
- **If you wish to discuss alternatives or stop your injection:** Please contact the surgery so we can review your options together. Most patients can continue their current treatment while considering their options.

If you have any questions or would like to review your contraception please contact us by filing an online consultation: Contact us about your request - Accurx Patient Portal