

# Depo Self-Administration Study

A 2018 study published in the journal *Contraception* from researchers at Planned Parenthood found that **giving patients the option to self-administer the birth control shot (aka Depo) at home is safe, improves access, and means patients are more likely to continue using the shot**. This study is a unique contribution to research on Depo, and is the largest U.S. study showing that women who choose to self-administer the birth control shot can use it effectively, are very satisfied, and experience fewer barriers to continued use. For more on this study and Planned Parenthood research, go to [plannedparenthood.org/research](https://plannedparenthood.org/research).

## The Study:

- Researchers randomly assigned 401 interested patients **ages 16-44** requesting Depo at health centers in New Jersey and Texas to either self-administration or clinic administration.
- Those in the self-administration group were given the option of learning to self-administer the subcutaneous birth control shot at home.
- Health center staff taught participants in the self-administration group to self-inject and observed their first injection; they received instructions, a sharps disposal container, and **three doses** for home use.
- Participants in the clinic administration group received injections in the health center.
- All participants received injection reminders and Depo at **no cost**.
- Participants completed surveys at the time of enrollment, at six months, and at 12 months.

## Who Participated:

- Participants ranged in age from 16-44. The average age was **26 years**.
- Half self-identified as Hispanic (**51%**); 27% identified as Black and 18% as White.
- **Forty-five percent** had health insurance at enrollment, approximately half of which was Medicaid.
- **Fifty percent** of participants reported having trouble paying for medical care in the last year, and 26% had difficulty paying for transportation.
- **Over half** (56%) were current or past Depo users.

## The Results:

- At one year, 69% of people in the self-administration group had used the shot continuously (i.e., no gaps in use), compared to 54% in the clinic group, a statistically significant **15% difference**.
- Satisfaction with Depo at 12 months was **high and similar** between the self-administration and clinic groups.
- Among the self-administration group, **97%** reported that self-administration was very or somewhat easy, and **87%** said they would recommend it to a friend.
- Among the clinic group, **52%** said that they would be interested in self-administration in the future.

**Continuous Use Of Depo For One Year**

