

DMPA Scenario 1

You had a heart attack a year ago that you saw a doctor for.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer "YES" to question 1 — *Have you ever had a stroke or heart attack, or do you currently have a blood clot in your legs or lungs?* Women with these conditions may be at somewhat increased risk of blood clots if they take DMPA. Women who have had any of these conditions will commonly have been told that they have had this condition and will answer "YES," if appropriate.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

She should be counseled on other available contraceptive options, such as IUDs, implants, condoms or sterilization, for which a history of heart attack is not a contraindication.

DMPA Scenario 2

You are a 42-year-old woman and are healthy. Three years ago you had surgery to remove an abnormal breast lump, which was confirmed to be cancer.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer "YES" to question 2 — *Have you ever been told you have breast cancer?* These women are not good candidates for DMPA, because breast cancer is a hormone-sensitive tumor, and DMPA use may adversely affect the course of the disease.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

She should be counseled on other available contraceptive options, such as IUDs, condoms or sterilization, for which breast cancer is not a contraindication.

DMPA Scenario 3

You are currently seeing a doctor for a liver problem because you had noticed that your eyes had become yellow. (You have active viral hepatitis.)

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer “YES” to question 3 — *Do you have a serious liver disease or jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)?* This question is intended to identify women who know that they currently have a serious liver disease and to distinguish between current severe liver disease (such as severe cirrhosis, liver tumors or active hepatitis) and past liver problems (such as history of hepatitis). Women with serious liver disease should not use DMPA, because DMPA is processed by the liver and its use may adversely affect women whose liver function is already weakened by the disease.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

She should be counseled on other available contraceptive options, such as IUDs, condoms or sterilization, for which active viral hepatitis is not a contraindication. As part of her counseling, she should be guided to talk with her provider about her liver condition and the possibility of beginning DMPA after treatment is completed.

DMPA Scenario 4

A provider told you that you have high blood sugar.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer “YES” to question 4 — *Have you ever been told you have diabetes (high sugar in your blood)?* Among women with diabetes, those who have had the disease for 20 years or longer, or those with vascular complications should not be using DMPA because of the increased risk of blood clots.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

Evaluate or refer the client to a higher-level provider for evaluation. If she has no complications, the woman may still be a good candidate for DMPA. Provide her with condoms to use in the meantime.

DMPA Scenario 5

You were told you had high blood pressure when you went to the clinic two years ago.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer “YES” to question 5 — *Have you ever been told you have high blood pressure?* Women with blood pressure of 160/100 or higher should not use DMPA because they may be at increased risk of stroke or heart attack.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

Evaluate or refer the client to a higher-level provider for evaluation. If her blood pressure is below 160/100, she may still be eligible to receive DMPA. Provide her with condoms to use in the meantime.

DMPA Scenario 6

You have been experiencing light vaginal bleeding/spotting at different times throughout the month for about two months. You never had this happen before.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer “YES” to question 6 — *Do you have bleeding between menstrual periods, which is unusual for you, or bleeding after intercourse (sex)?* This client may have an underlying pathological condition. While DMPA use does not make these conditions worse, it may change the bleeding pattern and mask a serious underlying condition. Unusual bleeding changes may indicate pregnancy or tumor that should be evaluated or treated by a higher-level health care provider. DMPA use should be delayed

until the condition can be evaluated. In contrast, women for whom it is not unusual to have irregular bleeding patterns may safely initiate DMPA use.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

Evaluate or refer the client to a higher-level provider for evaluation. She may still be a good candidate for DMPA after the cause of the unusual bleeding is established. Provide her with condoms to use in the meantime.

DMPA Scenario 7

You had a baby two weeks ago and are breastfeeding.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not medically eligible because she should answer “YES” to question 7 — *Are you currently breastfeeding a baby less than six weeks old?* There is some concern that the hormones in breast milk could have an adverse effect on a newborn during the first six weeks after birth.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

The provider should ask the client to return for her DMPA injection in four weeks. Note that if the woman says she cannot return in four weeks, it is a policy in some countries to give the first postpartum injection at the time she requests it (or even in some cases at discharge from the hospital). The facilitator will need to be aware of the national guidelines and adapt this answer accordingly.

DMPA Scenario 8

You are a healthy woman who started your menses five days ago.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

Yes.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is medically eligible because she answered “YES” to question 8 — *Did your last menstrual period start within the past 7 days?* — which means she is not pregnant. Each of the pregnancy-related questions (8-13) describes a condition

which effectively prevents a woman from getting pregnant. Thus, there is practically no chance a woman may be pregnant if she has any one of these conditions present.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

The provider should provide the client with DMPA. No additional contraceptive protection is needed.

DMPA Scenario 9

You are a healthy woman who answers “NO” to all the checklist questions.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today’s visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

She is not eligible because pregnancy has not been ruled out (since she answered “NO” to questions 8-13). Although she is medically eligible to use DMPA, if she is pregnant, she does not need a contraceptive. (Accidentally initiating DMPA will not harm a developing fetus.)

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

The provider should let the client know that she is not necessarily pregnant, but that another approach will be needed to rule out pregnancy (either a pregnancy test, awaiting her next menses, or a pelvic exam). Stress to providers that they should not lead the client to believe that she is pregnant and always provide her with some form of protection against pregnancy, such as condoms, until pregnancy can be confirmed or ruled out.

DMPA Scenario 10

You are a 37-year-old woman with four children and are requesting DMPA. Your doctor told you on two occasions that you had an elevated blood pressure (140/85 Hg) but that you don’t need to take any medication yet to control it. (If the provider wants to take your blood pressure, tell them that it is 140/85 Hg.) Your husband has been away from home for the past two weeks and you haven’t had sex since your last menstrual period.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today’s visit?*

Yes.

2. Why or why not?

She is medically eligible because although she answered “YES” to question 5, her blood pressure is low enough. The explanation for question 5 states that women with blood pressure levels of 160/100 Hg or more should not initiate DMPA. Because the client’s blood pressure is somewhat elevated, but still below 160/100, she can be an appropriate candidate for DMPA use.

3. What course of action would you take next?

Proceed with DMPA initiation. The facilitator may point out that some follow-up may be required after she initiates DMPA to make sure that her blood pressure remains the same. (This is true for all conditions in category 2.)

DMPA Scenario 11

You are a 28-year-old woman with three children. You and your husband consider your family complete (you do not want any more children) and would like to use an effective contraceptive method. After a counseling session, you decided that you want to initiate DMPA. You are healthy, but for the past two months you have noticed light bleeding/spotting every time you’ve had intercourse. You meant to go to the doctor, but hadn’t gotten around to it yet.

1. Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today’s visit?

No.

2. Why or why not?

The explanation for question 6 suggests that unusual bleeding after intercourse may indicate an underlying pathological condition. While DMPA use won’t make this condition worse, it may change bleeding patterns and mask symptoms, making timely diagnosis more difficult.

3. What course of action would you take next?

DMPA use should be delayed until the condition can be evaluated. Provide her with condoms to use in the meantime.

DMPA Scenario 12

You are a 31-year-old woman who gave birth seven weeks ago and want to prevent another pregnancy by using DMPA as your method of choice. You are breastfeeding your baby, but sometimes you have to be away from home for work. When that happens, your mother-in-law gives the baby formula. Your husband uses a condom every time you have sex.

1. Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?

Yes.

2. Why or why not?

According to the explanation for question 7, a breastfeeding woman can initiate DMPA six weeks after her baby is born. Because this client gave birth seven weeks ago she is medically eligible to start DMPA. Also, because condoms are used at every sex act, she would answer "YES" to question 13 — *Have you been using a reliable contraceptive method consistently and correctly?* Therefore, pregnancy is ruled out.

3. What course of action would you take next?

Proceed with initiation of DMPA.

DMPA Scenario 13

You were just diagnosed with a blood clot in your leg and are currently being treated for it.

1. Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?

No.

2. Why or why not?

She should answer "YES" to question 1 — *Have you ever had a stroke or heart attack, or do you currently have a blood clot in your legs or lungs?* Women with a blood clot in their leg may be at risk of making their condition worse if they take DMPA. Women who have this condition usually seek medical attention, are told that they have this condition and will answer "YES".

3. What course of action would you take next?

Counsel the woman about other available contraceptive options, such as an IUD, condoms or sterilization, for which deep venous thrombosis (blood clot) is not a contraindication.

DMPA Scenario 14

You are a 26-year-old woman planning to initiate DMPA as your method of choice. You are healthy; the only time you had a health problem was during your last pregnancy when a doctor registered elevated blood pressure. However, your blood pressure returned to normal after delivery. Among other things:

You are in the middle of your menstrual cycle,
Your youngest baby is one year old,
You and your husband have intercourse at least twice a week,
You have never had a spontaneous or induced abortion,
You are trying to use the calendar method for family planning, but are having trouble calculating safe days.

1. *Is this client a good candidate for receiving DMPA during today's visit?*

No.

2. *Why or why not?*

According to the instructions for questions 8-13, women who answered "NO" to all six questions are not protected from pregnancy and the provider cannot be reasonably sure that such women are not pregnant at the time of their visit.

3. *What course of action would you take next?*

Depending on available resources, either pregnancy can be ruled out by a pregnancy test or the woman should wait until her next menstrual period begins before starting DMPA. She should be given condoms to use in the meantime.

