

INJECTABLE CONTRACEPTIVE CAN WEAKEN BONES, COMPANY WARNS

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Toronto---The manufacturer of an injectable contraceptive is warning teenagers and young women that the drug could permanently weaken bones.

Loss of bone density is a side-effect of long-term use of the contraceptive, called Depo-Provera, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said this week. The FDA added the drug is still safe and effective.

Depo-Provera is a hormone treatment that is injected every three months for contraception.

Pfizer Canada cautions women not to use the drug while they're teens or young adults because those years are a critical time for bone mass development.

The company is working with Health Canada to issue a warning on the drug's packaging.

In a statement, the FDA said patients should only use the drug if other types of birth control are not an option or are "inadequate."

Depo-Provera packages in the U.S. currently warn women who have breast cancer, liver problems, a past stroke or blood clots in the legs against using the drug.

The FDA said it called for a new packaging warning after analysing data on the drug's long-term effects on bone density.

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