



### **Little evidence of weight gain with progestin-only contraceptives**

#### **Clinical question**

What is the association between progestin-only contraceptive use and changes in body weight?

#### **Bottom line**

There was little evidence of weight gain for women when using progestin-only contraceptives. Some differences were noted when a progestin-only contraceptive was compared with no hormonal contraceptive. Actual mean weight gain was low for 6 to 12 months, ie, less than 2kg in most studies. Good counselling about typical weight gain may help reduce discontinuation of contraceptives due to perceptions of weight gain.

#### **Caveat**

It was not possible to conduct a meta-analysis due to the range of contraceptive methods examined and differences in reporting of weight change. More weight gain was noted at 2 and 3 years, but was generally similar for both comparison groups. People may gain weight over time regardless of contraceptive use.

#### **Context**

Progestin-only contraceptives are appropriate for many women who cannot or should not take oestrogen. Many progestin-only contraceptives are long-acting, cost-effective methods of preventing pregnancy. However, concern about weight gain can deter the initiation of contraceptives and cause early discontinuation among users.

#### **Cochrane Systematic Review**

Lopez LM et al. Progestin-only contraceptives: effects on weight. Cochrane Reviews, 2011, Issue 4. Article No. CD008815. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD008815.pub2.

*This review contains 15 studies involving over 8400 participants.*

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