Depo-Provera Counseling: Side Effects

Directions

Two participants in your group will assume (or be assigned) roles. One will be a clinician, the other a client. Participants taking part in the role play should spend a few minutes reading the background information and preparing for the exercise. The observers in the group also should read the background information so that they can participate in the small group discussion following the role play.

Participant Roles

Clinician: The clinician is an experienced family planning service provider. S/he is calm and knowledgeable when counseling clients.

Client: The client is a 29-year-old woman with six children. She has been using Depo-Provera since 6 weeks after the birth of her youngest child 2½ years ago. She says that she had trouble breastfeeding her child because of the Depo. She kept taking the Depo, however, because she was more concerned about another pregnancy than about her problems with breastfeeding.

Situation

The client now comes to the clinic complaining of feeling very tired and unable to do her work for the past several months. She is sure it is because she has been taking Depo for such a long time. She thinks it would be a good idea to take a rest period from Depo.

Focus of the Role Play

The focus of the role play is on the interaction between the clinician and the client. The clinician needs to assess the relationship between the client’s problems and her use of Depo-Provera. S/he also needs to counsel and reassure the client regarding her misconceptions about Depo-Provera. The client should remain firm in her wish to take a rest from Depo-Provera until the clinician provides her with the information that will calm her fears and concerns.

Observer Discussion Questions

1. How did the service provider approach the client?
2. How might the service provider improve her interaction with the client?
3. Are the client’s past or present problems related to her use of Depo-Provera? Did the service provider explain this in an appropriate and convincing manner?
4. What might be better or alternative contraceptive choices for her? Why?