April - January 2009: Birth Control

Condom Facts -- http://www.hli.org/condom_facts.html

Population Controllers Complain that Indigenous People in Bolivia are Aware of Health Risks of Contraceptives: Curiously, abortionist organization Marie Stopes Int'l blames these beliefs on a lack of "sex education"; perhaps it's MSI who lacks medically accurate knowledge...

Studies Find Contraception Makes Women Obese and Newborns Too Thin

Swiss Women Abandoning the Pill Due to Adverse Health Effects

Plan B Pharmaceutical Information from FDA and Barr Pharmaceutical

Lawsuits over Ortho Evra 'Patch' Birth Control Continue to be Filed even as Older Cases Settle

The Pill: What You Might Not Know

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Population Controllers Complain that Indigenous People in Bolivia are Aware of Health Risks of Contraceptives.

Supporters of contraception and population control are deeply concerned that indigenous people in Bolivia are aware

that using the birth control pill causes cancer and other diseases. [ed. You'd think they'd be overjoyed that these people already knew the true facts!]

According to the Bolivian newspaper La Razon, "among the inhabitants of the high plains there exists the belief that contraceptive methods, with the exception of the condom and the rhythm [method], cause cancer and other illnesses in those who use them."

The newspaper says that it did a "tour" of various communities situated on the road to Oruro, asking the people what they believed about birth control, and claims they know "very little."

However, numerous scientific studies published in peer-reviewed journals have shown a statistical link between the use of the pill and various diseases, including breast cancer, cervical cancer, bladder cancer, heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, hardening of the arteries, suppressed sex drive, and sterility.

The La Paz representative of the abortionist and pro-contraceptive organization Marie Stopes International, Patricia Suaznabar, reportedly claims that the beliefs of the Bolivian indigenous are "myths" that she says are spread by "religious groups."

La Razon says that Suaznabar told them that "ignorance about sex education topics and contraceptive methods create myths fomented by machismo," in the words of the newspaper. "Added to this is the position of some religious groups that see contraceptive methods as something bad and indicate that they are abortifacient or that they have very negative secondary effects," she said.

However, scientists and physicians openly acknowledge that one of the mechanisms of the contraceptive pill is to prevent implantation of the zygote in the wall of the uterus, thereby destroying a newly-conceived human life.

Several indigenous people interviewed by La Razon indicated they were using Natural Family Planning (NFP), although the newspaper erroneously referred to it as the "rhythm method," an outdated system no longer in use. NFP is approved by the Catholic Church as a natural way of avoiding pregnancy by avoiding sexual intercourse at certain times of the month.

Adolfo Castañeda of Human Life International commented to LifeSiteNews that, "The supposed 'ignorance' of the indigenous people shows the actual ignorance of those who call them 'ignorant,' who not only do not know the facts about hormonal contraceptives but not even about NFP as they reduce it to the rhythm method."

Related: New Study Shows Contraceptive Pill Increases Risk of Heart Disease, Stroke

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2008/may/08050713.html

Birth Control Pill Linked to Hardening of the Arteries

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2008/apr/08040807.html

New Study Shows Double Cervical Cancer Risk for Oral Contraceptive Users

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2007/nov/07111406.html

Massive Study Finds the Pill Significantly Increases Cancer Risk if Used more than Eight Years

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2007/sep/07091306.html

The Pill: "the largest unregulated human trial that's ever been conducted"

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2006/mar/06030705.html

[2Apr09, M.C. Hoffman, Bolivia, www.LifeSiteNews.com]

Studies Find Contraception Makes Women Obese and Newborns Too Thin. University of Ottawa researchers have found that women who conceive
within a month of taking birth-control pills tend to have premature babies or babies with a low birth weight. At the same time, another study from the University of Texas has revealed that users of the contraceptive "shot" are significantly more likely than other women to become obese.

Xi-Kuan Chen, an epidemiologist and senior analyst with the Canadian Institute for Health Information at the University of Ottawa said doctors should inform patients of the link between chemical contraceptives and low birth weight, which is a growing problem in Canada, because children born too thin are likely to suffer health problems later in life.

"Doctors should be bringing this to the attention of patients," said Dr. Chen in a National Post report. "When they consult with some patients, they should suggest there might be some effect for them."

The study used the singularly comprehensive database of the Saskatchewan drug and medicare plans to look at 1,500 women, divided

into three groups, who had taken contraceptive drugs within 30 days, 31-60 days and 61-90 days of their last period before becoming pregnant. They then compared the birth weight of their children with 6,100 women who had not used birth-control pills for at least a year before they gave birth.

Analysis of the data showed that women who had taken the pill within 30 days of getting pregnant were more than three times as likely to have a very low-weight newborn (under 3.3 lbs) and twice as likely to have a child born weighing less than 5.5 pounds or to deliver the child six weeks prematurely.

The report also showed that the longer the abstention from contraceptive drugs before conceiving, the closer the newborns birth weight would be to those women who had not used birth-control pills.

Dr. Chen said that although the study does not definitively prove a cause-and-effect relationship and needs to be confirmed by more research because it did not take into account factors such as smoking, which also contribute to low birth weight and prematurity, the results of the study should not be ignored.

At the same time as the findings of Dr. Chen's study are being reported, Dr. Abbey Berenson at the University of Texas Medical Branch has revealed that the use of certain contraceptive drugs causes significant weight gain and an increase in body fat, according to a study published in the current issue of the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

Dr. Berenson and her team of researchers studied the use of the contraceptive drug depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA), commercially known as Depo-Provera, which is delivered in the form of a shot, and found that DMPA users were more than twice as likely to become obese as women who did not use that contraceptive drug.

"Women and their doctors should factor in this new data when choosing the most appropriate birth control method," said Berenson.

"One concern is DMPA's link to increased abdominal fat, a known component of metabolic syndrome, which increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke and diabetes."

See related LSN articles:

Abortion-Causing Birth Control Patch Manufacturer Faces Class-Action Lawsuit

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2005/jul/05072703.html

Two Canadian Women Die from Use of Contraceptive Patch; Sixteen More Suffer Blood Clots

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2008/jan/08011105.html

The Pill: "the largest unregulated human trial that's ever been conducted"

http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2006/mar/06030705.html

[9March09, Thaddeus M. Baklinski, Ottawa, LifeSiteNews.com]

Swiss Women Abandoning the Pill Due to Adverse Health Effects. The use of the contraceptive pill is plummeting among younger women, in response to growing awareness of its destructive health effects, reports a French bioethics site.

According to the site "Genetique," the use of "the pill" among women aged 15 to 24 years old dropped from 43% in 2003 to 26% in 2007. The rate of childbirth among the same group increased at the same time.

"The principal reason for this decrease is the attention paid by women to their health," says Genetique.

"It is now proven that the pill suppresses libido and causes weight gain. The fear of cancer and sterility are equally responsible."

According to numerous studies on the effects of the contraceptive pill, its use is also linked to increased risk of heart disease, hypertension, and stroke.

Related coverage:

New Study Shows Contraceptive Pill Increases Risk of Heart Disease, Strokehttp://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2008/may/08050713.html

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Birth Control Pill Linked to Hardening of the Arteries

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[26Feb09, M.C. Hoffman, Paris, www.LifeSiteNews.com]

Plan B Pharmaceutical Information from FDA and Barr Pharmaceutical

http://www.go2planb.com/PDF/PlanBPI.pdf

[PFLI PharmFacts]

LAWSUITS OVER ORTHO EVRA 'PATCH' BIRTH CONTROL CONTINUE TO BE FILED EVEN AS OLDER CASES SETTLE. Johnson & Johnson has already agreed to pay over $68.7 million to settle Ortho Evra lawsuits over their birth control patch, yet new cases continue to be filed by women who have suffered a blood clot injury caused by the contraceptive patch.

Ortho Evra is a form of birth control that delivers the active ingredients through a patch that women wear on their skin. The birth control patch must be worn once a week, for three consecutive weeks, to continuously provide hormones into the skin and the blood stream.

It is the only available form of birth control patch, which was introduced in 2002 by Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson.

Studies have established that use of a patch for birth control results in women receiving about 60% more estrogen than

the birth control pill, which has led to an increased risk of blood clot side effects with Ortho Evra, including an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes, deep vein thrombosis (DVT), pulmonary embolism or sudden death in women using the birth control.

Over 4,000 lawsuits over Ortho Evra have already been filed in state and federal courts by women who allege that their injuries were caused by Johnson & Johnson’s failure to adequately warn about the increased risk of blood clots associated with the patch.

The Ortho Evra warning label has been updated several times since the birth control was introduced, with the most recent warnings coming in January 2008.

The first label change in 2005, only indicated that women using Ortho Evra were exposed to 60% more estrogen than the birth control pill. In September 2006, information was added about a study which found that Ortho Evra side effects potentially double the blood clot risk, but conflicting information was also included about another study which indicated that users of the patch and the pill face equal risks.

In January 2008, the FDA and Johnson & Johnson announced that the warning label for Ortho Evra would be further strengthened to include information from a study which found that users of the birth control patch face an increased risk of serious and potentially fatal blood clots, known as venous thromboembolism (VTE). In addition, conflicting information about whether the risk is greater than that associated with the pill was removed from the warnings.

In October 2008, Bloomberg News reported that Johnson & Johnson has already paid out at least $68.7 million in confidential settlements involving their birth control patch.

Since that time, the drug maker has continued to negotiate with Ortho Evra lawyers representing individuals who have filed lawsuits, primarily negotiating settlements for cases that allege injuries suffered prior to the earlier warning label changes.

Birth control patch lawsuits continue to be filed by women who have suffered blood clot injuries, with the latest case filed on December 1, 2008, in the Eastern District of Texas. The lawsuit was filed on behalf of 36-year-old Karenetha Easterwood, who suffered a blood clot in her lungs, known as a pulmonary embolism.

Easterwood alleges that Johnson & Johnson and their subsidiaries misled consumers and continued to provide inadequate warnings until January 2008.

Although the current warnings have been strengthened, consumer advocates have questioned why the information was not placed in a “black box,” which would be the strongest warning that can be added to a prescription drug.

In addition, Public Citizen filed a petition with the FDA in May 2008 calling for an Ortho Evra recall, arguing that the risk of serious and potentially fatal side effects from the patch outweigh any potential benefits provided over other available forms of birth control. [December 5th, 2008 http://www.aboutlawsuits.com/lawsuits-over-ortho-evra-birth-control-continue-1964/]

THE PILL: WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW

http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=6484342

Even With More Women on Birth Control, Many Don't Hear About the Variety of Side Effects. A new pilot program in London will make the birth control pill available next month, through pharmacists, without a prescription. It's a big shift from December 1955, when scientists made the first presentation that progesterone can stop women from ovulating, and many states had laws banning the use of contraception.

Despite nearly 50 years of access to the pill, some women are clueless about side effects that doctors might not bother sharing, and some that are just being discovered.

"Doctors in general tend to hesitate to suggest things to the patient," said Dr. Nanette Santoro, director of reproductive endocrinology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City and a member of The Endocrine Society.

"These are things that wouldn't have a major health impact."

Santoro said, with limited time in appointments, doctors focus on the major side effects that can pose a health risk: the risk of blood clots among smokers, high blood pressure, and stroke with some migraine headaches, for example.

But Santoro knows of many less-pressing and idiosyncratic side effects from the pill that don't always make it into the doctor's talk.

Women on the pill may suffer a lackluster sex drive, mood swings, or even extra sinus pressure, she said.

"Some women may notice their sinuses are a little stuffier," Santoro explained. "It speaks to the bigger point that pills do affect the mucus production of the body."

That means mucus, whether on the cervix or in the nose, can become thicker.

This August, research began to confirm another strange connection between the birth control pill and a woman's nose.

In a study of about 100 college students in the U.K., scientists found that the pill may change how women find a man's

scent sexually attractive.

The study collected body odor from volunteers and put it in jars for the ladies to smell. Among the 200-300 different chemical compounds in sweat, researchers tried to draw a connection to the woman's reaction to the sweat and a by-product in the sweat from the major histocompatibility complex (MHC) genes, which contribute to the body's immune system.

Since the late 1990s, research has shown that women find the scent of a man more attractive if he has MHC genes that are different from their own, and less attractive if he has similar MHC genes.

But that all may change two months after a woman goes on the pill.

The Pill May Change How You Choose a Man

"In the pill-using group, there was a significant shift in their preference for men who had more similar odors," said Craig Roberts, a co-author of the August MHC study appearing in the "Proceedings of the Royal Society B," and a lecturer at the University of Liverpool in the U.K.

Roberts said the women in the control group who didn't take the pill only started to find men with different MHC genes more attractive in the second round of body odor sniff tests.

"It's an odd thing to do, smell odors in jars," Roberts said. "We don't know the effects in the real world, but it does carry implications for women who are using the pill, and you can extrapolate from this very artificial laboratory study quite a long way."

For example, "They may choose someone they may not choose otherwise," he said. In theory, Roberts said a woman may choose a man while she's on the pill and feel fine, but subconsciously find her mate less attractive if she goes off the pill.

"There is evidence that couples that are more MCH similar to each other have more difficulty conceiving, and they have more miscarriages," added Roberts, who has also cited research that women who marry men with similar MCH genes are more likely to have an affair.

Aside from chemical conjectures, Einstein's Santoro has heard straight from her patients that the pill can affect one's sex life.

"Clearly, pills suppress androgen production in the ovary, so, to the extent that androgen levels drive sex drive in women, it could affect them," said Santoro, who is also a doctor with the Montefiore Medical Center in New York City.

"It's also possible for some women...to have a libido problem. ... Once they start on the pill, it may reduce their enjoyment in some way out of guilt," she said.

Santoro said many of her patients tend to think of the pill as an off-switch for hormones, but in truth, the pill exposes women to higher levels of hormones to overcome their own cycle.

Other Side Effects From the Pill"Because the pill in a lot of ways produces a pseudo-pregnant state, some of the side effects of pregnancy are noticed in the pill," Santoro said.

That means women on the pill may experience heartburn, or constipation, or sleep disturbances, either as insomnia or extra sleepiness.

Santoro said doctors are also less likely to get into great detail about weight changes.

"We tell our patients that weight doesn't change if you take the pill ... but among the individual women, there may be some who gain and some who lose," said Santoro, who added that large studies on the subject might cancel out the average weight changes experienced by women on the pill.

Overall, Santoro said she'd spend more time talking about the pill's more serious health risks and side effects with a patient.

"Women over 35 who smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day -- they shouldn't be taking the pill at all," she said.

For patients who have migraines with aura, which refers to feelings and symptoms noticed shortly before the headache begins, "they should not take pills without making sure everybody's on board."

Santoro said although research hasn't drawn any hard-and-fast conclusions about side effects from taking the pill for an extended period of time, many of her patients have decided to give the hormones a break.

"It's outdated, but some women feel better if they take a little 'pill holiday' now and then," she said.

[By LAUREN COX, ABC News Medical Unit, Dec. 18, 2008; http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=6484342; www.LifeSiteNews.com, 18Dec08]

Comment: Much of this is not new information at all. When I worked in South Carolina in a cardiac cath lab during the mid-eighties, we had a patient, a 31-year-old female, slender, a smoker, and who had been on “the pill” for quite some time. She had a major heart attack, a totally obliterated right coronary artery. And the cardiologist brought these facts to everyone’s attention in the room, including the patient. So this is not one of the things “just being discovered.” --Deb Sturm, RN

http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=6484342

THE MANY CURIOUS SIDE EFFECTS OF THE PILL

"Doctors in general tend to hesitate to suggest things to the patient," admits Dr. Nanette Santoro, a prominent New York endocrinologist, when interviewed for this revealing article on the Pill. Blood clots, high blood pressure and strokes among certain groups are frequently discussed in office visits, but such lesser side effects as weight changes, sinus congestion, heartburn, constipation, and sleep disturbances are rarely mentioned. New research even suggests that the Pill distorts the way some women’s sense of smell contributes to their choice of male partners.

[“The Pill: What You Might Not Know,” ABC Medical Unit, 12-18-08, http://abcnews.go.com/Health/WomensHealth/Story?id=6484342&page=1; posted 18Dec08]

Co-Creator of the Pill Laments Resulting Demographic "Suicide Scenario"

An Austrian chemist who helped spearhead the creation of the earliest contraceptive pill has expressed dismay at the severance of sexuality and reproduction made possible by widespread use of the pill, and has warned against the impending demographic disaster from plummeting birth rates.

Carl Djerassi wrote of his concern in a commentary appearing in the December issue of Austria's Der Standard, where he described couples who regularly contracept as "wanting to enjoy their schnitzels while leaving the rest of the world to get on with it."

Djerassi, who is a chemist, novelist, and playwright, is best known for helping create the synthetic hormone progestin norethindrone in 1951, together with Mexican Luis E. Miramontes and Hungarian George Rosenkranz. The far more potent synthetic hormone was soon used for contraceptive purposes as it remains effective when taken orally, unlike natural female hormones.

At the time, Djerassi had said that "not in our wildest dreams" had he expected the chemical to be used for contraception. Now, he writes, "My contribution is to help these people wake up," referring to Austrian couples who freely contracept.

Lamenting that there is now "no connection at all between sexuality and reproduction," Djerassi said, "This divide in Austria, a country which has on average 1.4 children per family, is now complete. Most Austrians enjoy sexual intercourse without thereby wanting or begetting a child."

Djerassi explained that Austria, which is now home to more seniors over 65 than children under 15, would soon enter "an impossible situation" as the lopsided population would result in a working class too small to support the needs of elderly

pensioners.

Therefore, he urged, Austrians would have to quickly adopt an immigration policy designed to counteract the effects of widespread contraception lest the population commit "national suicide." [8Jan09, Kathleen Gilbert, VIENNA, LifeSiteNews.com] (To view the original article in German, go to: http://derstandard.at/?url=/?id=1227288533020)

American Society of Reproductive Medicine Statement Confirms the Pill Causes Abortion. Amidst an ongoing debate among prolife advocates about whether to classify the Pill as an abortifacient or a prophylactic, pro-abortion advocates have published an authoritative statement declaring that the Pill prevents implantation of embryos, thereby causing an abortion.

In a supplement to its November 2008 issue, top reproductive health journal Fertility and Sterility published the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) statement, “Hormonal contraception: recent advances and controversies.”

In a summary of the development of contraception in the United States the statement called oral contraceptives the “most widely used” reversible method. In the “wide variety” of oral contraceptives that are available, the “mechanisms of action” are the same, said the statement: “inhibition of ovulation, alteration in the cervical mucus, and/or modification of the endometrium, thus preventing implantation.”

Pro-life advocates who oppose abortion, but not contraception, have long considered the Pill as an ethical contraceptive option, as opposed to the IUD, which causes abortions by preventing implantation. However, the statement by the ASRM clearly indicates that the pill is medically classified as a drug that acts by “preventing implantation,” thereby

causing the death of a fertilized embryo – a unique and living human being.

A large body of literature supports this statement, including articles from Fertility and Sterility. The most significant of these is a 1996 study by a group of OB/GYNs from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, that concluded that “impaired uterine receptivity” is “one mechanism by which OCs exert their contraceptive actions.” [12December2008, Ellen M. Rice, www.LifeSiteNews.com]