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Where can you learn more about Natural Family Planning?

- Billings Ovulation Method Association**
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- Couple to Couple League**
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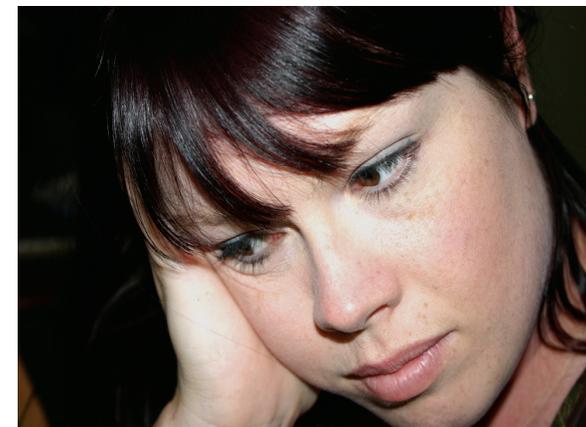
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Problems associated with Hormonal Birth Control



by

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Health Problems Associated with Hormonal Birth Control

Oral birth control (and all other hormonal birth control—HBC) is typically used to prevent pregnancy, but is sometimes prescribed for other medical conditions. HBC causes many potential adverse effects: medical, social and spiritual. The vast majority of HBC prescriptions are given by physicians to healthy women, including adolescents with no known disease. These women are prescribed hormonal birth control for one reason—to prevent the completely normal condition of pregnancy.

Since all medications have potentially unwanted side effects, some of them serious, it is important that a physician weigh the risks and benefits when prescribing any medication. It follows that it is unethical to expose healthy women to health risks in order to prevent a normal condition. The mistake of exposing women to these risks is quite grave since other methods of family planning exist, like Natural Family Planning (NFP), which have no side effects.

As physicians, we do not prescribe hormonal birth control. The medical reasons for this decision are as follows.

HBC Treats Women's Fertility and Childbearing as a Disease

Although there can be legitimate medical and personal reasons for avoiding pregnancy, female fertility and the possibility of pregnancy itself are not diseases, and therefore do not need a pill (or patch, shot, IUD) for "treatment."

HBC Causes Abortion

When HBC fails to suppress ovulation and other mechanisms of action in a sexually active woman, conception may occur. HBC interferes with the implantation of a new human being by reducing the thickness of the lining of the uterus and altering implantation molecules and factors. Typical low dose HBC formulations only prevent the release of the female egg in about 65-75% of cycles.^{1,2}

For this reason, pregnancy, and subsequent chemical abortion, is possible on average every third cycle.

HBC Contributes to an Anti-Life Mentality

HBC (whether the Pill, patch, IUD or Shot) underpins the practice of abortion. People unwittingly conclude: "If birth control fails, abortion is the solution." A nation-wide survey indicated that 54% of the women who had an abortion were using birth control the month before.³

HBC Increases the Risk of Breast Cancer

Women face an increased risk of developing breast cancer while taking HBC and for at least ten years after the use of HBC is stopped. If the Pill is taken before a woman's first pregnancy, there is a 44% increased risk of breast cancer.^{4,5}

HBC Increases the Risk of Blood Clots to the Lung

Although the increased risk is small, it is significant because it is a side effect of an unnecessary medication prescribed to healthy women. The risk is highest for HBC-using women who are overweight, smoke, or who are over 35 years of age.⁶

HBC Causes a Continuous Change in Healthy Body Metabolism

HBC can produce migraine headaches, weight increase, moodiness, and loss of libido. It contributes to early increased bone loss.⁷ It is associated with infertility after prolonged use, and even to some extent with short-term use.

BC Increases the Incidence of Uterine Cervix Cancer

The use of HBC is associated with a significant increase in cancer of the cervix.⁸ It is likely that this is caused by infection with Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) which is sexually transmitted since a considerable number of women who use HBC have a higher rate of sexually transmitted diseases due to sexual relations outside of marriage.

HBC Increases the Risk of Liver Tumors

There is some evidence that oral birth control increases the risk of certain benign and malignant liver tumors.⁹

HBC Increases the Risk of Heart Attacks

Both the first and second generation oral birth control formulations have been linked to an increased risk of heart attacks (myocardial infarctions) and ischemic strokes.¹⁰ The third generation oral birth control pills are associated with increased risk in ischemic stroke.¹¹

Harmful Effects of HBC on Marriage and Society

Hormonal birth control fosters the mentality that men and women are incapable of self-control and are thus not able to abstain from sexual intercourse. The introduction of HBC was the catalyst for the sexual revolution with dramatic increases in premarital sex, adultery, divorce, abortion, and out-of-wedlock births. HBC has had an indirect role in the dramatic increase in single-parent families, poverty and associated social ills in the U.S.^{12,13}

Natural Family Planning Is Just as Effective as Hormonal Birth Control in Preventing the Birth of a Child

NFP is free of the harmful side effects to women and families, and when used for just and serious reasons NFP can be very good for married couples.¹⁴

