

Insider Health Secrets

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Toxic Effects of Birth Control Pills

Birth Control Pill Use Increases Blood Clot Risk

Reference: British Medical Journal, November 11, 2000;321:1190-1195

"Third generation" oral contraceptives are linked to a more than doubled risk of potentially fatal blood clots known as venous thromboembolisms.

The research from Boston University School of Medicine in Massachusetts indicates that oral contraceptives containing desogestrel or gestodene **increased the risk of blood clots by a factor of 2.3** compared to older birth control pills containing levonorgestrel.

The findings support earlier research about the potential danger of the "third-generation" pills that caused a scare in 1995 and resulted in a warning to doctors and pharmacists about the potential dangers. Since the warning, the number of women taking the "third generation" pill has dropped by about 80%.

The researchers estimated that **if women had not switched after the warning** there would have been **about 26% more cases of blood clots.**

Women at increased risk of heart disease would be better off avoiding the levonorgestrel pills which can lower the levels of cardio-protective HDL cholesterol.

Our Comment:

Birth control "pills" are really **birth control "drugs" with far-reaching, potentially disastrous results to your health.** Birth control pills or oral contraceptives are **SYNTHETIC hormones** that the body is not designed to handle. Long term use increases the user's risk of developing serious **chronic illness** as this study highlights. In addition, birth control pills can deplete the following nutrients:

- Vitamin B2
- Vitamin B6
- Vitamin B12
- Folic Acid
- Vitamin C
- Magnesium
- Zinc

Before using any synthetic hormones, become informed about the risks. An excellent, very readable author is Dr. John Lee who discusses the benefits of natural hormones as well as the negative effects of synthetic hormones.

Newest Version Of Birth Control Pill May Cause Blood Clots

Reference: British Medical Journal, September 25, 1999;319:795-796, 820-821

The latest generation of birth control pills, which were introduced in the 1980s and early 1990s, may raise a woman's risk of blood clots even more than earlier oral contraceptives. Danish investigators tracked hospital admissions for venous thromboembolism, a group of disorders that includes pulmonary embolism (clots in the lung), and deep venous thrombosis (most often clots in large veins in the legs).

The study authors found that for both men and women aged 15 to 49, the number of cases of venous thromboembolism was fairly steady from 1977 to 1988. In the period from 1989 to 1993, however, the men's rate did not change, but the hospitalization rate for women was more than 16% higher. The study gives support to the hypothesis that third generation birth control pills increase the risk of venous thromboembolism to a larger extent than second-generation birth control pills.

Our Comment:

Birth control pills increase the risk of blood clots (thromboembolism), liver and gallbladder disease, heart attacks, stroke, breast cancer and they cause depletion of many essential nutrients. It would seem **wise for all women to avoid taking oral contraceptives**, regardless of any reason for taking them. There are other options for birth control that are far less dangerous.

If one is using birth control pills for birth control, there are far safer options such as the use of the Ovu-Tech, an inexpensive personal microscope evaluation which allows one to evaluate the cervical mucus for fertile days (to avoid sexual activity during these days). This can be used along with other safe forms of birth control (such as condoms, family planning, etc.) and can equal or exceed the ability of "the Pill" to avoid unplanned pregnancies.

If one is using birth control pills to control their menstrual cycles, irregular bleeding, ovarian cysts or endometriosis, they are taking a big risk with their health. The use of birth control pills is not able to correct the underlying dysfunction. There are far better, more effective natural remedies available such as the use of natural progesterone and female-supporting herbs.

Many menstrual problems are related to low progesterone levels in the last half of the cycle. Bio Health Diagnostics (800-570-2000) offers a program for testing free fraction salivary hormones (requires only a sample of your saliva) to assay female hormones. Saliva testing for female hormones has proven to be far more accurate than blood testing of hormones.

Birth Control Pill Use Increases Risk of Fatal Embolism

Reference: Lancet, 2000; 355: 2133-2134

Further reinforcing results of previous studies, new research from New Zealand suggests that the **use of oral contraceptives may cause a nearly 10-fold increase the risk of developing a fatal pulmonary embolism.**

Several previous case-control studies had found that their use was associated with an increased risk of deep-vein thromboses and nonfatal pulmonary embolism. The incidence was somewhat higher than we expected" stated one on the study's authors, who found that **65% of women who died from pulmonary embolisms were current oral contraceptive users.**

The risk of death from pulmonary embolism in oral contraceptive users was estimated at 10.5 deaths per 1 million woman-years, which is much higher than previous estimates, which had put the annual incidence at 1 or 2 per 10,000 women, with a fatality rate of only 1-2%. Risk factors for pulmonary embolism includes a past history of deep venous thrombosis, being extremely overweight, or prolonged immobility.

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Birth Control Pills Increase Risk of Breast Cancer

Journal of the American Medical Association, October 11, 2000;284:1791-1798, 1837-1838

Older generation birth-control pills may have significantly increased breast cancer risk among women with a family history of the disease. In a **study of 426 families**, investigators found that oral contraceptive use tripled breast cancer risk among women with sisters or mothers who had the disease. The risk was confined to women who used "the pill" prior to 1975.

Since then, birth control pills have evolved to include lower doses of estrogen and progestin, which may make them safer in terms of breast cancer, researchers suggest, although this will likely not be definitively known for years to come.

The breast cancer link was strongest among women with five or more cases of breast or ovarian cancer in their families. In these women, **birth control pill use was linked to an 11-fold increase in breast cancer risk.**

An editorial accompanying the study notes that "the use of oral contraceptives needs to be considered on an individual basis," taking into account all of a woman's health concerns.

Our Comment:

Use of synthetic estrogens can clearly cause breast cancer. Using birth control pills presents many risks. Birth control pills have been found to increase the risk of blood clots (thromboembolism), liver and gallbladder disease, stroke, cancer and they cause depletion of many essential nutrients. It would seem **wise for all women to avoid taking oral contraceptives**, regardless of any reason for taking them. There are other options for birth control that are far safer and have virtually no dangerous side effects.

Synthetic progestins as found in birth control pills were never designed for the optimum health of the female body and should be avoided if one values their health.

Many women can benefit from using natural estrogen, such as estrogen-like compounds found in fermented soy (non-GMO) or estrogen-related herbs. Women who have had their ovaries surgically removed can often benefit from taking natural estrogen sources. It is often best to balance the estrogen sources with natural progesterone as found in natural progesterone cream.

Birth Control Pill, Gene Defect Tied To Clot Risk

New England Journal of Medicine, June 18, 1998;338:1793-1797, 1840-1841.

Two gene mutations -- including one found in up to 15% of whites -- and **oral contraceptive use are linked to an increased risk of cerebral-vein thrombosis, a potentially fatal disorder**

caused by clotting in the brain's venous system. Women with one of the gene mutations who also take oral contraceptives have a risk of cerebral-vein thrombosis nearly 150 times that of the general population.

Certain non-genetic factors, including smoking and the use of **oral contraceptives**, have also been **linked to an increased risk for thromboembolism (clotting) in various sites, including the legs, brain, retina, and liver**. The Italian researchers found that 20% of the patients with cerebral-vein thrombosis and 3% of the controls carried the prothrombin-gene mutation. Likewise, 15% of cerebral-vein thrombosis patients carried the factor V mutation, compared with just 3% of controls.

The investigators also discovered that the **most prevalent non-genetic risk factor** for (cerebral-vein thrombosis) was **oral contraceptive use, "which raised a woman's risk for the illness to 22 times that of nonusers."** The researchers point out that 96% of women suffering from cerebral-vein thrombosis were using the Pill at the time of their illness, compared with just 32% of controls. Finally, they found that in women who were taking oral contraceptives and also had the prothrombin-gene mutation, risk for cerebral vein thrombosis increased to nearly 150 times that of other women.

Our Comment:

It is not practical to be screened for this genetic mutation, since up to 90% of the cause of most ill health is due to dietary and environmental factors – not gene mutations. In addition, gene mutations do not have to be permanent. Using sound nutrition and health practices, the body may be able to self-heal some gene mutations. Excellent proven DNA repair substances can be used, including medicinal mushrooms (such as reishi), pine bark, CoQ-10, etc.

Birth control pills have been found to increase the risk of blood clots (as this study shows), liver and gallbladder disease, stroke, cancer and they cause depletion of many essential nutrients. It would seem wise for all women to avoid taking oral contraceptives.

If the **menstrual period needs to be better regulated or endometriosis is present, the therapy of choice is the use of natural hormones** (such as natural progesterone) – not birth control pills. Natural progesterone is much more effective, very safe and virtually without side effects. (See Dr. John Lee's books.) If pregnancy needs to be avoided, there are much safer methods than using birth control pills. (See article on the Ovu-Tech.)

Oral Contraceptives and Low HDL Increase Stroke Risk

Reference: Journal of Neurology and Neurosurgical Psychiatry, June 2000;69:29-33.

This study analyzed the relationship between various blood lipid parameters and the risk of **ischemic stroke in patients under 45 years of age**.

- There was no relation found between risk of ischemic stroke and total cholesterol, LDL

cholesterol, or triglycerides.

- Only low HDL cholesterol levels were shown to increase risk.
- Other increased risk factors included the use of oral contraceptives, high blood pressure, smoking, and male sex.

These risk factors remained, regardless of any apparent atherosclerosis. The authors state that although the relation between serum lipids and ischemic stroke remains controversial, low HDL cholesterol should be considered in the care of young patients regardless of the detectable presence of atherosclerosis.

Our Comment:

In addition to using birth control pills, one of the biggest causes of low HDL (associated with increased risk of stroke) is the over-consumption of refined carbohydrates (such as refined sugar and refined starches). The better choice is using complex carbohydrates.

There is no medical justification for taking birth control pills. The benefits of taking birth control pills simply do not outweigh the tremendous risks.

In general, **birth control pills increase the risk of blood clots, liver and gallbladder disease, stroke, cancer and they cause depletion of many essential nutrients.** It would seem **wise for all women to avoid taking oral contraceptives.**

Birth Control Pill Use Increases HIV Transmission Risk

Reference: Lancet, (1997;350:922-927)

HIV-infected women who take birth control pills are much more likely than other HIV-infected women to have detectable virus in the cervix or vagina, according to a new study. Other risk factors for viral shedding include vitamin A deficiency, gonorrhea infection, or yeast infections. Increased shedding of virus could mean a greater risk of transmission to either a sexual partner or to an infant during delivery. Heterosexual transmission of HIV is the predominant mode of infection among adults worldwide. Of children who acquire HIV-1 from their mother, 40% to 80% are estimated to become infected during delivery.

It's not clear why birth control pills, which contain synthetic estrogen and progesterone, should increase shedding of HIV in the genital tract. It's possible that the hormones influence immune system function or they may change local factors in the vagina, such as thickening cervical mucus -- which may enhance shedding of the virus. And as for vitamin A, it "has long been recognized to have a central role in maintenance of epithelial surfaces and normal function of the immune system.

Our Comment:

Although most women who take birth control pills are not infected with HIV, these powerful synthetic hormones have the potential to cause serious health complications even in normal

women. The above research study is just one example of **how birth control pills can disrupt normal physiology to increase HIV shedding in infected women.**

If you are taking birth control pills, your long term health interests would better served by finding a more natural option. (See article on the Ovu-Tech.)

Birth Control Alternative or Fertility Enhancer

Ovu-Tech Uses

You're trying to become pregnant. -- You're trying to avoid pregnancy. -- You want to determine whether you're ovulating. -- You want to enhance your awareness of your menstrual cycles.

During a woman's menstrual cycle, there are only about three days when her egg is available for fertilization. **Sperm can survive up to 72 hours (3 days) in the vagina and uterus**, so if sexual intercourse occurs up to three days before a woman is fertile, she can still potentially become pregnant. Thus, there are about **six days per month (3 days prior to fertility, and 3 days of fertility) that a woman can conceive.**

It is scientifically well established that hormones filter into saliva and that **during fertility, a ferning pattern can be seen in saliva under a high powered magnification lens.** Just prior to or during fertile days the sample will typically resemble "ferns," while during non-fertile days, only random and shapeless dots will be visible.

The Ovu-Tech is a hand-held mini-magnification lens about the size and shape of a lipstick holder. If you want **to check whether you may be fertile**, you simply: 1) Make sure you haven't had anything to eat or drink for 2 hours. 2) Put a small amount of saliva on the lens and allow it to dry. 3) Insert the lens into the magnification lens and push a little button to illuminate the lens.

If you are just about to become fertile or if you are fertile, you will easily see a beautiful crystalline ferning pattern under the magnification lens. This is an easy and convenient way for you to monitor your hormonal changes and enhance your awareness of your menstrual cycle. If you track your cycles and fertility on a calendar, soon you will have a keen awareness of where you are in your monthly cycle, and what is happening hormonally in your body.

Cycle awareness can be especially helpful for women who tend to have anovulatory cycles (no ovulation occurs and thus there is infertility, and no progesterone is made). If you know that you haven't ovulated in any given cycle, and thus your ovary won't be producing progesterone, you can then supplement with progesterone that month and avoid estrogen dominance symptoms such as PMS.

The ovulation kits that measure hormones in urine to determine fertility tend to be expensive, messy, and can only be used once. In contrast, at the cost of not much more than one ovulation kit, the Ovu-Tech can be used over and over, and has a lifetime manufacturer's warranty.

Magnification lenses for \$29.99 each (plus \$3.00 Shipping and Handling). 1-800-528-0559

Our Comment:

The Ovu-Tech offers a practical, completely **non-toxic** option for those who seek a reliable form of contraception and want to get off or avoid using birth control pills. When tracking the days of the menstrual cycle, the first day of menstruation (when vaginal bleeding begins) is called day 1 of that cycle. The cycle ends when the next period begins, around day 28 (but can vary anywhere between day 17 and 35). The egg may become available for fertilization by sperm at anywhere from day 3 to day 14 of the cycle.