

RISK FACTORS OF ORAL AND INJECTED CONTRACEPTIVES

General Considerations

- There are a variety of different oral and injected contraceptives available.
- They consist of low-dose mixtures of synthetic estrogens and synthetic progestins or sometimes just synthetic progestins.
- These contraceptives work by suppressing the endocrine system and preventing ovulation.
- The "Pill" is often given to "regulate" the female cycle. It does not regulate, it suppresses.
- By preventing ovulation, these drugs promote an increasing condition of estrogen dominance.
- Injected contraceptives like Depo-Provera typically last for a 3 month period and may be related to increased side effects and increased likelihood of adverse reactions (risk factors).

Some of the Known Risk Factors of Oral & Injected Contraceptives

1. Triples the lifetime risk of breast cancer when taken before the age of 18. *
2. Headaches and migraines.
3. Insulin resistance.
4. Cervical dysplasia, ovarian cysts and infertility.
5. For many women, it will be an underlying cause of chronic fatigue/fibromyalgia.
6. Gall bladder problems.
7. Endocrine disorders.
8. Mental and emotional side effects.
9. Loss of libido.
10. Anti-anxiety, anti-depressant or sleeping pill usage.
11. Birth defects and birth marks in offspring.
12. Estrogen dominance.
13. Increased risk of high blood pressure.
14. Increased risk of blood clots.
15. Increased risk of stroke.
16. Increased risk of heart attack.
17. Increased risk of ovarian, breast and uterine cancer.
18. Thyroid and liver problems and cancer.
19. Reduced antioxidant levels, especially in the liver.

* Lee, John R., M.D., David Zava, Ph.D., and Virginia Hopkins, What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Breast Cancer: How Hormone Balance Can Help Save Your Life, Warner Books, (2002) p33

20. Nutritional deficiencies, especially Folic Acid, B12, B6, other B complex vitamins, Magnesium, Manganese, Zinc and Vitamin A.
21. Interferes with copper in the body, eventually causing copper toxicity.
22. Interferes with steroid hormones balance.
23. Immune dysfunction and autoimmune disease.

Other Options For Contraception

For both natural birth control and fertility awareness, see **Taking Charge of Your Fertility: The Definitive Guide to Natural Birth Control and Pregnancy Achievement**, by Toni Weschler, MPH. This outlines the Fertility Awareness Method.

For descriptions and discussions of various forms of birth control and alternatives to oral contraceptives, see **Our Bodies, Ourselves For the New Century** by The Boston woman's Health Collective.