



Since the advent of birth control more than 50 years ago,

women have repeatedly been told that the drugs and devices being offered to help them avoid pregnancy are “safe and effective.” We’re told that the “small percentage” of women who experience adverse reactions is so minimal the risks simply don’t outweigh the benefits. We believe all women’s lives matter, no matter how small the “percentage.” And we also believe women deserve the facts about the “safe and effective” drugs and devices they’re using, and why incidents of serious injury – even deaths – have been increasing in recent years with the introduction of a variety of trendy new birth control products. The following is a list of some of the shocking and largely unreported details of a spate of major lawsuits that have been occurring in just the last decade.

The following Women of Grace® resources may be helpful in doing additional research on this topic:

Blog Posts:

New Book Shatters Birth Control Myths - <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=23524>
Poll: Most Women Uninformed About Pill Dangers - <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=6265>
Should the Pill be Available Over-the-Counter? <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=17832>
The Pill is Not the Answer - It's the Problem! <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=49082>
Big Pharma Behind War on Women <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=40018>
The Politics of Birth Control Pill Pollution <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=31825>
Women of Grace: Helping Our Sisters Heal <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=29650>
27 Women Die from Off-Label Contraceptive <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=25257>
Father of the Pill: Egg Freezing & Sterilization is Family Planning of the Future <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=8185>
Birth Control Pills May Alter Choice of Partners <http://www.womenofgrace.com/blog/?p=3083>

Store Resources:

Breast Cancer: Link to Abortion and the Birth Control Pill <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/1515/>

The Misogyny of Women's Health Care <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/1514/>

The Sexualization of Woman: Culture's Attack Against the Feminine <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/1111/>

Abortion Distortion & Contraception Deception <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/683/>

Healing and Hope After Abortion <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/1622/>

Going Green: The New Sexual Revolution <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/1500/>

JP II: The Woman's Advocate <http://shop.womenofgrace.com/product/687/>

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Women's Lives Matter!

How the Birth Control Industry is Destroying Women's Lives

- Although they say the number of serious illnesses resulting from birth control use is small, consider the 12,000 lawsuits currently pending against Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals, Inc., the manufacturer of the trendy new Yasmin and Yaz pills. These pills, which contain the new "fourth generation" progestin known as drospirenone, have been linked to blood clots, gall bladder disease, stroke, heart attack and death in young women. (Source: Lawyers and Settlements.com) Note: If you're wondering why we don't hear about these cases, consider the fact that in 2008, Yaz accounted for 17.7% of the birth control market with sales of \$616 million and Yasmin had 11% of the market with \$382 million in sales. (Source: AboutLawsuits.com)

- Proponents like to point out that even though the pill was declared a Class 1 carcinogen by the World Health Organization in 2005 - which means it has been found to cause cancer in both laboratory and human studies - it has also been found to offer protection for certain types of cancers, such as ovarian and uterine. This is true, but the pill is also known to cause cancers, such as breast, cervical and liver cancers. (Source: American Cancer Society; Burkman R, Schlesselman JJ, Ziemann M. Safety concerns and health benefits associated with oral contraception. American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology 2004; 190(4 Suppl):S5-22.) In other words, you might not get ovarian or uterine cancer, but you could get breast, cervical or liver cancer. How safe is that?

- The British Medical Journal revealed that the pill also increases a woman's risk of developing cerebrovascular disease (hypertension and stroke) by 1.9 times. A 25 year follow-up study with 46,000 British women also noted that the enhanced risk of death lasts for 10 years after women have stopped taking the pill. At particular risk are women who are overweight, sedentary, frequently take long plane flights, injure a leg, have had recent surgery, smoke, have a family history of blood clots, have high blood pressure (over 160/100mg) or suffer from migraines - a list that probably includes 80% of the adult female population of the U.S.

- Forms of artificial contraception that deliver hormones by means other than pill form have also been found to be dangerous, such as the Ortho-Evra patch, which delivers hormones through the skin by use of a patch. Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiary Ortho McNeil, manufacturer of the Ortho Evra Patch, has thus far paid \$68.7 million to settle more than 4,000 state and federal lawsuits brought about by women who have suffered adverse side effects, from blood clots to heart attack and stroke. Ortho Evra has also been blamed for 20 deaths. (Source: Lawyers and Settlements.com)

- NuvaRing is no better. This is a vaginal ring that delivers hormones directly into the bloodstream, stopping ovulation by releasing a combination of the hormones estrogen and progestin into the body. This delivery causes what expert witnesses call hormone "spikes" that make women more susceptible to blood clots. In some cases, the blood clots were fatal. In 2014, the manufacturer, Merck, settled more than 1,700 lawsuits for a combined \$100 million to litigants who claimed the active ingredient in the drug, etonogestrel, was inadequately tested before NuvaRing's 2002 release. (Source: DrugWatch.com)

- Then there are the "devices" such as Essure, which consists of flexible metal coils that are inserted into the fallopian tubes. The coils create an infection which causes scar tissue to form, thus closing off the tubes and rendering the woman sterile. The problem is that the coils can dislodge and travel into the body where they have been known to lodge in, or perforate, organs. It has also been known to cause fetal disfigurement due to nickel poisoning. Chronic pain, exhaustion, bouts of depression and suicidal thoughts have also been reported by women who have used the device. The FDA has received nearly 10,000 reports of adverse events and yet insists on keeping the device on the market, calling for more testing - not by independent researchers - but by the same company that is profiting off the sale of the device. Why wasn't this testing done before product was launched? This is what more than 27,000 injured women - known as the "E-sisters" - want to know. They have banded together along with activist Erin Brokovitch to continue the fight to get this product off the market. (Source: FDA, Essure Problems Facebook page)

- Mirena's track record is just as bad. This IUD is manufactured by Bayer and is referred to as a "second generation" contraceptive because it contains levonorgestrel, a synthetic hormone that sometimes prevents ovulation. It has significant and very painful side effects, such as amenorrhea, intermenstrual bleeding and spotting, abdominal pain, pelvic pain, ovarian cysts, headache, migraines, acne, depression, and mood swings. Like Essure, the device has a tendency to migrate outside the uterus. According to AdverseEvents.com, the top three adverse events related to the use of Mirena were device expulsion, device dislocation and vaginal hemorrhage, with more than six percent of patients requiring hospitalization or surgery. In spite of this, Bayer continues to hawk this product, particularly to busy moms, even though the FDA scolded them in 2009 for overstating its efficacy and understating its risks. To date, the product remains on the market and rakes in more than a billion dollars a year for Bayer. (Source: Lawyers and Settlements.com)

- And let's not forget the injectable contraceptives such as Depo-Privera. This contraceptive, which is a favorite of population controllers working in third world countries, comes with a black box warning stating that prolonged use of the drug may result in significant loss of bone density. The loss is greater the longer the drug is administered - and it may not be completely reversible after discontinuation of the drug. In addition, there are 45 other adverse effects women can experience from taking this drug. (Source: FindLaw.com)

A 2010 study found that, after just two years of using Depo, almost half the women in the study (47.4 percent) had lost at least 5 percent of bone density at the spine or hip and continued to experience significant bone density losses in subsequent years of use. (Source: Rahman M, Berenson A, "Predictors of Higher Bone Mineral Density Loss and Use of Depot Medroxyprogesterone Acetate," Obstetrics & Gynecology 2010: 115(1): 35-40)

In just the few examples documented in this pamphlet, it's obvious that our bodies are being used as "laboratories" for the testing of dangerous drugs by the U.S. birth control industry which is expected to be worth \$19 billion by 2020. They say the numbers of women injured are small, but because experts believe most adverse events are not reported, it's safe to say we're talking about millions of women who are experiencing problems with today's birth control. For instance, if an estimated 37 million American women are currently using birth control, even five percent of that number is more than one million women! Maybe that's not much compared to those who use it without problems, but those one million lives matter to the people who love them - and they matter to us.

So spread the word! No matter how small is the "percentage" of women harmed by these drugs and devices, every woman's life matters!