

Abstract

Scientific data describing benefits and unprofitablenesses of oral contraception (OC), may diverse in many cases or could be also controversial. Therefore we have decided to draw up a background research diplomathesis, whose main objective was to summarize the currently available knowledge of the adverse effect in connection with the use of OC. To assess the relative benefits and risks of OC, we also examined the potential positive effects of OC use. More than half of the women terminate the use of OC because of the side effects. Irregular bleeding, nausea, weight gain, mood changes, feeling the tension in the chest and headache were reported as the most common side effects. Most of them disappear with the length of use. The clearly demonstrated serious risks of OC use include cardiovascular complications - stroke, thrombembolic disease, myocardial infarction and hypertension. The risk of this problem increases with higher content of estrogen, e.g. ethinylestradiol (EE). So far, however, there hasn't been proved that a reduction of EE below 50 µg results in a further significant reduction of thrombembolic events. The risk of cardiovascular problems is not dependent only on the estrogen content in OC. Contraceptives containing desogestrel or gestodene have been shown to have a higher risk of thrombembolic events compared to OC with levonorgestrel. Other adverse effects can be classified as potential risks of OC. These include irregular bleeding, effect on the female libido, depression, weight gain, nausea and vomiting, headache, tension in the chest, vulvodynia, the risk of a fetal death, migraine, mycosis genitalia and the risk of HIV. According to the current data, possible side effects of OC are breast cancer and cervical cancer. Women with a positive family history and women who used OC for several years before the first pregnancy have increased risk of the breast cancer. The situation regarding cervical cancer is more complicated, because previous studies showing a higher risk in women with OC did not take into account the presence of other risk factors related to the cervical dysplasia development. Recent studies that take into account these factors didn't prove higher incidence of cervical cancer among OC users. Some studies, however, described that there is increased risk, depending on the duration of OC use. Cancer of the stomach belongs to the unproved risks. The main benefit of OC, of course, is that OC is a highly effective protection against unwanted pregnancy and allows effective family planning. In addition, there are many other proofs of health benefits associated with OC use. The proven benefits of OC use include decrease in risk of endometrial and ovarian cancer, functional ovarian cysts, uterine inflammation, and extra-uterine pregnancy. The OC use also prevents from hyperandrogenic syndrome, menstrual problems and premenstrual syndrome. As the potential positive effects of OC are suggested lower incidence of colorectal cancer, benign breast disease, uterine myomas and osteoporosis.