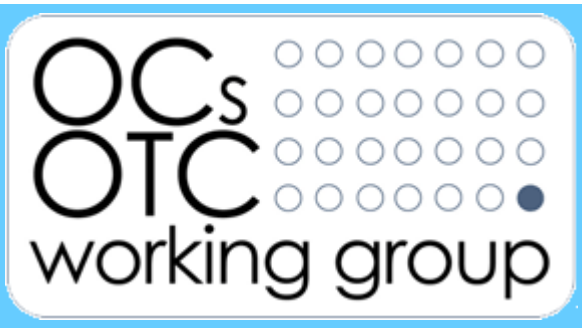

March 24, 2010

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About Us

The Oral Contraceptives (OCs) Over-the-Counter (OTC) Working Group is an informal coalition of reproductive health and rights organizations, nonprofit research and advocacy groups, university-based researchers, and prominent clinicians who share an interest in women's health and access to contraception. Our goal is to evaluate objectively the risks and benefits of demedicalizing contraceptive care, with an eye toward improving access to OCs and potentially other hormonal contraceptive methods by making them available without a prescription.

The working group is coordinated by Ibis Reproductive Health.

Dear working group member,

Below are two news items from the UK related to the working group. The first is an update about the pilot program providing OCs directly in pharmacies in London. Interestingly, they have found that two-thirds of the women taking advantage of the service are new OC users (as opposed to continuing users). This article can be accessed here.

The second piece relates to a cohort study comparing mortality among OC users and non-users in the UK who have been followed for up to 39 years. The study found that OC use was not associated with an increased risk of death-in fact, OC users had a lower risk of death from any cause and a lower risk of death from all cancers. The original article was published online in BMJ and can be accessed here. This paper corroborates the findings of several prior studies, including an analysis of the Nurses' Health Study in the US, which also showed no increased long-term risk of death after OC use.

Please send any comments my way!

Thanks,

Daniel Grossman
Senior Associate, Ibis Reproductive Health