

May 21, 2013

Dear Working Group Member,

In 2011, we performed a nationally representative survey of US women aged 18-44 years who were considered at risk of unintended pregnancy to assess their support for and interest in using an OTC daily oral contraceptive. The results of the study were just published online in the journal *Contraception*. Here are some of the highlights of our findings:

- 62% of women said they were supportive of the pill being available OTC
- 37% reported being likely to use an OTC oral contraceptive
- Interest in using an OTC OC was strongest among current pill users: 59% of current users said they were likely to use an OTC pill
- 28% of women using no contraceptive method and 33% of women using a method less effective than the pill (like condoms alone) said they were likely to start using the pill if it were available OTC
- On average, the highest amount women were willing to pay for an OTC pill was \$20 per cycle

We also included questions about the possible advantages and disadvantages women saw with an OTC pill, and these results are included in the paper.

Here are some links to press coverage of the article:

- *Reuters*: [Most women back over-the-counter birth control pill](#)
- *RH Reality Check*: [Time to demand all birth control pills be sold over-the-counter](#)
- *ThinkProgress*: [Most U.S. women want birth control pills to be available over the counter](#)
- *Women's Health Magazine*: [Do you think the pill should be available OTC?](#)

The abstract is below; please email [Sarah Roberts](#) if you would like a copy of the article.

Thanks,

Daniel Grossman, MD
Vice President for Research, Ibis Reproductive Health

Interest in over-the-counter access to oral contraceptives among women in the United States

Grossman D, Grindlay K, Li R, Potter JE, Trussell J, Blanchard K. *Contraception*. 2013 Apr 23. doi:pii: S0010-7824(13)00129-7. 10.1016/j.contraception.2013.04.005. [Epub ahead of print]

BACKGROUND: A growing body of evidence indicates that over-the-counter (OTC) access to oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) is safe and effective.

STUDY DESIGN: We performed a nationally representative survey of adult women at risk of unintended pregnancy using a probability-based online panel. In November-December 2011, 2046 eligible women completed the survey. Weighted proportions were calculated, and logistic regression was used to identify covariates associated with support for and interest in using an OTC OCP.

RESULTS: A total of 62.2% said they were strongly (31.4%) or somewhat (30.9%) in favor of OCPs being available OTC. A total of 37.1% of participants reported being likely to use OCPs if available OTC, including 58.7% of current users, 28.0% using no method and 32.7% using a less effective method. Covariates associated with a higher odds of reporting interest in using OTC OCPs were younger age; being divorced, being separated or living with a partner (versus married); being uninsured or having private insurance (versus public insurance); living in the south (versus northeast); and current use of OCPs or less effective methods, or nonuse of contraception (versus use of another hormonal method or intrauterine device). Among respondents who said they were likely to use OTC OCPs, the highest amount they were willing to pay was on average \$20.

CONCLUSIONS: US women are supportive of OTC access to OCPs, and many would obtain refills OTC or start using OCPs if they were available OTC.

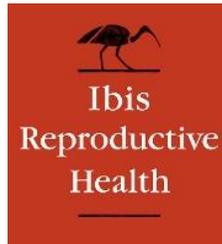
Get involved in the OCs OTC Working Group!

There are several ways you can get involved in the working group. 1) "Like" us on our [Facebook page](#)! 2) Sign on to our [statement of purpose](#). We welcome both institutional and individual endorsements. 3) Write a blog post, op-ed, or piece in your organization's newsletter or campus newspaper. If you are interested in this, we would be happy to help provide feedback and background articles, as well as help you think about ways to frame the piece. 4) Tweet about OCs OTC using the hashtags #OCsOTC and #freethepill. 5) Email [Dan](#) or [Kate](#) with any questions, comments, feedback, or other ideas.

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.



www.ibisreproductivehealth.org

Contact us

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