

[IMAGE]

Third-Generation Oral Contraceptives Increase Clot Risk

What's a "third-generation" oral contraceptive? Basically, it's the latest form of the birth control pill, containing a combination of the hormones desogestrel or gestodene and small doses of estrogen. Earlier forms of the pill, specifically "second-generation" oral contraceptives, contain different hormones (levonorgestrel and low-dose estrogen) in different amounts.

The distinction between second and third-generation oral contraceptives is important because previous research (three studies in 1995) links the latter form of the pill to increased risk for blood clots. A more recent study in the *British Medical Journal*, involving more than 361,000 women monitored from 1993-1999, supports this notion. The study noted approximately double the risk in women taking third-generation contraceptives vs. women taking second-generation contraceptives. These results were maintained after considering other potential causes of blood clots.

Talk to your doctor about the pros and cons of oral contraception and other forms of birth control. For more information on women's health issues, visit <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/women.html>.

Reference:

Jick H, Kaye JA, Vasilakis-Scaramozza C, et al. Risk of venous thromboembolism among users of third-generation oral contraceptives compared with users of oral contraceptives with levonorgestrel before and after 1995: cohort and case-control analysis. *British Medical Journal*, Nov. 11, 2000: Vol. 321, pp1190-95.

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