

these women so that they can be given some other forms of conception control. The larger population will be presumably normal and for them the potential production of serious complications such as liver disease, vascular disease, or diabetes mellitus are only a theoretical speculation at this time.

For the philosophical area of conclusions there are significant lessons to be learned from the past. As new modalities of conception control are introduced into medicine for normal subjects, it is important that ongoing prospective in-depth studies of their toxicity be carried out. In December, 1969 Dr. E. Tyler et al. of Los Angeles published their long term followup of one of the first groups of women in the United States to be given the oral contraceptives. Now after 12 years of use and with a current population of more than 8 million women taking these drugs in this country, they can report on but 176 women using the same drug, but at varying dosages, for only 4 to 10 years (50). The maintenance of a large core group for followup is not easy nor inexpensive, but it must be done to insure the safety of future generations. The studies must follow a pure research design utilizing selected drugs and isolated component steroids at the minimum dosages needed for effectiveness, then in future reviews we will no longer need to refer to "oral contraceptive studies" but to specifics such as the progestin X study of 17 women taking the drug for 36 months time. Only this kind of information is truly meaningful. Practicing physicians must be kept aware of the recent advance in our knowledge of fertility control so that their patients receive the most effective and safest form of treatment possible. And finally, newer methods of conception control should be developed. The fact that in these studies just related to you, the estrogen component of the oral contraceptive can be implicated in most of the adverse reactions, suggests that the "mini-pill" era of conception control utilizing progestins alone, may be at least a temporary solution to our problems. Continued scientific investigations and communications are imperative.

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