

The pill was named at the hearings as a possible factor in blood clots, cancer, heart disease and other ailments. Robert H. Finch, secretary of health, education and welfare, advised doctors to alert women to possible risks but he also cautioned against "over reacting."

Last Sunday Surgeon General Jesse Steinfeld said a growing amount of evidence would indicate other forms of contraception would be safer for some women.

However, he said, "I think the pill has saved more lives than it has cost."

To some women, he indicated, the possible risk of taking the pill may be less than complications such as miscarriages and hemorrhages.

Some doctors say they have noticed an increase in unwanted pregnancies which they attribute to women forsaking the pill.

Meanwhile, big money hangs in the balance. Some nine million women last year bought \$100 million worth of oral contraceptives.

Will the sales eventually decline?

A Gallup poll shows that 18 per cent of women surveyed who used oral contraceptives in the last three months have stopped using them, largely because of the adverse publicity from the hearings.

But two-thirds of the 895 women between 21 and 45 years of age surveyed believe the advantages of the pill outweigh the risks, the poll said.

Many druggists questioned by the associated Press reported concern among pill users.

"Some customers seem very upset," said Dick Berg, owner of the Loop Pharmacy, one of the largest in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

Berg checks with doctors before refilling old prescriptions and of those he said he had talked to since the hearings, not one had withheld a prescription, he said.

Obstetricians interviewed in Albany, N.Y., said they are being asked to recommend alternatives to the pill more frequently as a result of adverse publicity.

One said 10 to 15 per cent of his patients on the pill have requested other forms of contraceptives.

"We are selling more intrauterine devices in the last two months than we ever have," said J. Vinson Riley, manager of four drugstores in various sections of Atlanta.

"The pills have dropped by a small amount . . ."

Senator NELSON. I might say that as to the concern of people around the country hearing different things, I would guess that the fact is that if the doctors had told them in the first place, what are the known side effects and the contraindications, then they would not have been frightened when they heard it. As the Newsweek article stated, two-thirds of the women in the country had heard nothing about the side effects and when they read it in the paper, they became disturbed about it. That is not the fault of the testimony here, that is the fault of the physicians in not advising the patient, and the press failure to publish the FDA committee reports.

Thank you very much, Doctor.

Senator Hatfield?

Senator HATFIELD. Dr. Kane, in most studies of this type their validity is related directly to the number of people involved and the time over which the study is made. These two are factors in judging the merits of the study. What do you believe to be the time factor necessary to draw conclusions from such a study as yours and what number do you think is a sufficient base for making such studies? I know you alluded to this, but I would like to have you reiterate it at this point.

Dr. KANE. There are two kinds of studies one could do. One involves the prospective studies comparing use in large populations—