The warning—ordered by the FDA this month despite AMA and other medical opposition—would tell women of possible side effects such as increased risk of blood clotting and advise "careful discussion with your doctor."

"We must remember that we are long past the medicine man times when no patient knew anything about medicine except where it hurt," Edwards told a meeting here of the Pharmaceutical Advertising Club.

At almost the same hour, the AMA house of delegates voted to oppose "any requirement that interjects a federal agency between a physician and his patient."

The resolution listed these objections:

"The proposal to supply information on side effects . . . intrudes on the patient-physician relationship and compromises individual medical evaluation . . . The proposed statement would confuse and alarm many patients. The package insert is an inappropriate means of providing a patient with information regarding any prescription drug; the most effective way to inform the patient is through the physician."

The resolution also stressed "the importance of making certain this FDA requirement not be extended to other prescription drugs."

The AMA also attacked the FDA for withdrawing drugs from the market on the basis of recommendations made by review panels "without consulting clinical practitioners." It criticized release of drug information to the public before informing doctors.

This last was specifically triggered by an FDA statement that pills for diabetes control may be ineffective and even harmful. That statement was based on a new University of Maryland study, one which is being questioned now by a number of diabetes specialists.

The AMA delegates—this time in agreement with federal health officials—strongly opposed Justice Department rather than health agency jurisdiction over dangerous and potentially dangerous drugs. Justice officials want the authority both to declare drugs dangerous and to decide who may use them in research.

AMA delegates then turned to an even broader health issue the health of the public, especially those who are poor and lack care. Sunday an AMA committee heard a series of consumer delegations complain for three hours over medical and hospital failures.

The meeting was sometimes unruly, and the chairmanship was seized by a consumer spokesman. One AMA delegate today said such sessions should be held again only if there are "no takeovers" and there is "protection of AMA members and guests from obscenities."

His view did not prevail. The delegates voted to consider holding such a forum at every AMA meeting, as well as establishing a "multi-ethnic advisory committee" on the special health care problems of minority groups.

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THE PILL AND THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

(By Morton Mintz)

MORTON MINTZ, a seasoned student of the drug industry, is the author of "The Pill: An Alarming Report," just published by Beacon Press in hardcover and Fawcett in paperback.

During the recent hearings on The Pill, spokesmen for population control organizations charged that vast numbers of women were being scared off the drugs, would become pregnant, and would bear children who, being unwanted, would be beaten by their parents.

Phyllis Piotrow, former executive director of the Population Crisis Committee, went so far as to suggest that there will be a crop of "Nelson babies," in dubious honor of Senator Gaylord A. Nelson, the Wisconsin Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Monopoly Subcommittee. His Republican colleague from Kansas, Senator Robert J. Dole, who can be counted upon by the drug industry for support at climactic moments, came through again. The "Nelson babies" phrase, he said, "is all right with me."

If it really is all right, which it really isn't, then it also is all right, presumably, to personalize any diseases caused by The Pill—say, "Piotrow strokes" or "Dole thromboembolisms."