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RESEARCHER PREDICTS BAN ON THE PILL

(By Barbara Yuncker)

A total ban on The Pill within two or three years is predicted by an English endocrinologist whose research contributed to recent strong official warnings in Great Britain about many forms of the oral contraceptives.

Dr. Victor Wynn of the University of London Medical School believes all forms of The Pill will be withdrawn "when we start to get the first clinical cases of cancer which can be linked to oral contraceptive use in women," he said. Such links have been made in test animals.

Senate hearings on Pill safety and the adequacy of warnings given women users are to begin Jan. 14, Sen. Nelson (D-Wis.), chairman of the monopoly subcommittee of the Senate Small Business Committee, announced today, confirming an earlier story in The Post. Public sessions are set for Jan. 14, 15, 21, 22, 23, 28 and 29.

In making the announcement, Nelson said, "It appears evident that a substantial number of users are not advised of any of the health hazards or side effects by their doctors."

Wynn, a vociferous Pill critic for at least six years, because of the various body-system and cell changes it produces, was interviewed during a visit here for conferences at the federal National Institute of Health which helps support his research. He said his top research associate, Dr. John W. H. Doar also conferred with members of Nelson's staff, before returning to London over the weekend.

Wynn's strongly-voiced opinions that possible cumulative effects leading to cancer and heart disease are not measurable and that women need far strong warnings of Pill effects, led him to a dramatic on-camera blowup with the dean of U.S. birth-control spokesmen, Dr. Alan Guttmacher, president of Planned Parenthood-World Population.

The incident occurred during a taping of the David Frost show for next Monday on which Wynn had been invited to explain why the Pill use alarms him and Guttmacher had been invited as one of several discussants. When Wynn challenged the statistical and scientific arguments that the Pill was reasonably safe, Guttmacher lost his temper and strode out of the studio.

"He undertook to lecture me . . . on my alleged lack of understanding of the medical literature," Guttmacher, who is a distinguished obstetrician, said after the incident.

Guttmacher accused Wynn of inaccuracy in his interpretation of some of his research findings and of misleading women by "never mentioning that these changes he finds so alarming are reversible when women go off The Pill. That's a dishonest omission."

Guttmacher's position is that The Pill is acceptably safe in contrast to the risks of unwanted pregnancies and if women and their physicians are adequately alerted to side effect dangers. "I'm not sure The Pill is the safest thing ever invented," he said. "But it's not the lethal thing that this character and Barbara Seaman would have you believe."

(Mrs. Seaman, who was also a discussant on the same show, is author of a new book "The Doctor's Case Against The Pill.")

The research of Wynn and Doar has to do with changes in how the body handles carbohydrates and fats when The Pill is used; they interpret these changes as similar to those that precede diabetes.

Nelson, in announcing his hearings, cited British studies indicating one in every 200 women on The Pill suffer blood clots serious enough to require hospitalization and that the clots are fatal to one in 67,000 women between 20 and 34 and in one in 25,000 between 35 and 44.

Although drug companies are required to put into the package of the drugs as shipped a warning of serious possible dangers, Nelson said, many doctors did not get or read these package inserts and "it appears evident that a substantial number of users are not advised of any of the health hazards or side effects."

Nelson charged that Pill manufacturers in their pamphlets for distribution to patients, "make light of the minor dangers and do not even mention the major dangers of The Pill."