



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

December 11, 2017

CONTACT: Paloma Zuleta
202-812-4477
pzuleta@powertodecide.org

HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION REMAINS EFFECTIVE OPTION FOR MILLIONS OF WOMEN

(Washington, D.C.) — A study recently released by the New England Journal of Medicine compared the breast cancer rates in 1.8 million Danish women age 15 to 49 who used hormonal birth control to breast cancer rates in women who relied on non-hormonal methods. Per the study, for every 100,000 women, the use of hormonal birth control resulted in an additional 13 cases of breast cancer a year. Specifically, there were 68 cases of breast cancer for hormonal contraceptive users as compared to 55 cases for non-hormonal contraceptive users. The study was conducted over the course of 11 years and filtered out women who had previously been diagnosed with cancer, had undergone infertility treatments, and had experienced blood clots.

“Like most medications, the risks of using hormonal contraception should be balanced carefully against the benefits, to include lowering the risk of other forms of cancer such as ovarian and endometrial. The risks also need to be considered in the context of other health benefits, not least of which is their effectiveness in preventing an unplanned pregnancy,” said Ginny Ehrlich, Chief Executive Officer, Power to Decide. “Experts agree that by in large, hormonal contraception continues to be a safe and effective option for millions of women in this country, The implications of this research need to be assessed carefully for any individual woman. This is all the more reason why it is essential that all women have access to high quality contraceptive counseling and care without barriers, so they can discuss and select the method of birth control that makes most sense for them. For those looking for non-hormonal methods of contraception, today’s consumer can also choose from a variety of methods that are consistent with their needs and lifestyle.”

We also hope that there will be further analysis of the data, as the study did not consider alcohol use, limited physical activity, or breast-feeding as possible contributors to breast cancer among hormonal birth control users. To learn more about the full range of contraceptive methods, visit <https://www.bedsider.org/methods>.

Power to Decide is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live, or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Please visit us at www.PowerToDecide.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.