

Dear Friends,

I just wanted you to see this thread of a discussion on some points related to the HHS mandate.

**Although the religious liberty issue is universally compelling, another crucial point is that birth control is NOT preventative care** (see below). **The current administration wants this to be about the Catholic Bishops denying women their "women's health"**. This is why I feel our recent research article is so timely and important right now (1). The pill is not a warm little fuzzy harmless object. It causes significant harm and the American people have been deceived for long enough. **As a practicing physician, I see the fallout every day—young women with blood clots in their legs, strokes, early breast cancer, HPV, and cervical cancer. This is NOT about women's health; it is about preventing and killing babies.** The present administration will try to pit US Bishops against women and try to portray the bishops as a bunch of old men that don't want women to have their "women's health" options, but this has no credibility.

Every day, I, my husband Benjamin, and other doctors like us do TRUE preventative care. We do pap smears looking for cervical cancer, perform breast exams looking for breast cancer, refer for mammograms, order colonoscopies looking for colon cancer, and give immunizations to prevent pneumonia and influenza. These time-tested measures are very different from prescribing a pill to prevent a CHILD. **A child is not a disease. Pregnancy and fertility are not disease states; they are normal physiological processes of the human body.**

The point also needs to be hammered home that we are not just talking about insurance mandated contraception—we are talking sterilizations, "morning-after" pills, and abortions. Christians and Catholics can come together on the abortion issue. Accordingly, **the way the pill causes abortions needs to be explained in a coherent manner** (2). Manufacturers of the current birth control pill formulations have reduced estrogen content in an attempt to reduce some of the risks cited above. But, reducing the estrogen increases the likelihood of ovulation. The pill's "backup" mechanism then comes into play by preventing implantation of the several day old embryo into the uterine wall. **Since life begins at conception, the layperson can understand that this necessarily means that the new life is aborted.**

Finally, regarding the recent decision of Komen to reinstate support for PP, the hypocrisy of this must be exposed. Birth control and abortion—PP's 2 major lines of business—**INCREASE** the risk of breast cancer (3).

All people of integrity want women to have options regarding their family planning, but why are the only discussed options those that are contrary to the Catholic Church's teaching? **Fertility awareness and modern methods of Natural Family Planning—over a dozen distinct methods—cause NO harms at all! All have wonderful benefits for women that empower them, strengthen their families, and work with their bodies in the natural way God created them.**

Blessings,



Rebecca Peck, MD

PS It should also be pointed out that **HAVING** children and **BREASTFEEDING**—a woman using her body as it is designed—actually protect a woman's health. **Pregnancy is not a disease; pregnancy PREVENTS disease.**

(1) Peck, R; Norris, C. "Why OCPs Should Not Be Part of a Preventative Care Mandate: Significant Risks and Harms of OCPs", *Linacre Quarterly*, Feb 2012 (forthcoming)

(2) Stanford, J; Larrimore, W. "Postfertilization effects of OCPs" [www.polycarp.org](http://www.polycarp.org)

(3) Kahlenborn, C. <http://www.polycarp.org/overviewbreastcanceroralcontraceptives.htm> and <http://www.polycarp.org/overviewabortionbreastcancer.htm>

Dr Rebecca Peck, MD, is a family physician who teaches NFP (symothermal and Marquette methods) and fertility awareness to women through her practice and parish (Prince of Peace, Ormond Beach, FL). Her husband Ben is also a family physician, and they practice together at Pecks' Family Practice. "He is an amazing man, and we both love the teachings of our Catholic faith and are very active in our local Catholic Medical Association guild and parish. We have 6 children (ages 9, 7, 6, 5, 3, and 9 months). God has been very good to us."