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President's Page

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Unnatural Family Planning

The epitome of incongruity today is the attitude toward things "natural." The trend toward the use of "natural" methods of delivery, "natural" infant feeding, "natural" foods, "natural" vitamins, "natural" environment — all of these are, indeed, refreshing. And yet, "natural" family planning strikes a discordant note when sounded today.

Natural family planning has become more prevalent of late because of unfavorable reports of the side effects and hazards of the pill and IUD. Many physicians and patients who would consider abortion on demand as a fail-safe method of birth control most unnatural and unacceptable, nevertheless continue to prescribe and use the contraceptive pill and IUD.

The literature of today documents beyond question the rare but nonetheless real micro-abortifacient mechanism of action of the pill. By stunting the development of the endometrium, thus making it incapable of nurturing the fertilized ovum, the pill does induce abortion. The popularity of the microdose 50 mcg pill (1/20 the strength of the original 10 mg pill) has increased the incidence of micro-abortion. Various reports in recent literature document the occurrence of ovulation in as many as 40% of women on this regimen. Obviously then, if ovulation occurs in this significantly high ratio, micro-abortion also occurs.

There is no doubt that the principal action of the intrauterine device is abortifacient. Recently the documentation of increased levels

of Beta HCG demonstrated at the onset of menses in women wearing IUD's gave laboratory support to this thesis.

The use of vaginal suppositories of prostaglandins regularly on the 27th or 28th day of the menstrual cycle will also effectively prevent childbirth. The individual who is squeamish about the possibility of inducing abortion might be reassured by the knowledge that a fertile woman regularly exposed to pregnancy (and promptly aborted) could conceive only 2.4 pregnancies a year. Therefore, she would be inducing abortion only infrequently, and since she would have no way of knowing exactly when, she would have no qualms of conscience — "naturally."

It is of interest to note that nature protests this routine by reacting with nausea, vomiting, chills, headache, diarrhea, when prostaglandins are administered.

Since 1973, more than 7 million abortions have been performed in the United States. Most "unnatural."

— Joseph J. Ricotta, M.D.
