

Medical Journal: Political Correctness Prevents Women from Learning About Abortion Risks; Politics Trumps Science in Abortion-Breast Cancer Link

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 14 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Scientists, women's groups, and the media have consistently suppressed or ignored research that establishes a direct link between abortion and breast cancer for their own political purposes. Further, women considering abortion are not given true informed consent about the real risks of the procedure as a result of withholding this evidence.

Those are the conclusions of the new study published in the Summer 2003 Issue of the peer-reviewed Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons (JP&S) titled "The Abortion-Breast Cancer Link: How Politics Trumped Science and Informed Consent."

The article discusses the epidemiologic evidence of an ABC link; the silence and denial of the National Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society, the American Medical Association and women's groups; media bias; the bitter opposition of pro-abortion politicians; the implications for patient care; and medical malpractice issues.

A companion article documents at least 49 studies that demonstrate a statistically significant increase in premature births or low birth weight with prior induced abortions.

Karen Malec, author of the article on the abortion-breast cancer link, suggests that the U.S. Supreme Court might have come to a different finding in *Roe v. Wade* if the science had been available to them while making their

decision:

"A reason cited for the decision was that modern aseptic technique and antibiotics made it possible for abortions to be performed safely. The court's opinion might have been different if the justices had been aware of earlier epidemiological research supporting a relationship between abortion and breast cancer."

Studies showed link as early as 1957

Malec shows how several studies conducted as early as 1957 showing the link were suppressed or ignored, as were later post-Roe studies that showed significantly higher rates of breast cancer in the "Roe Generation." For example, Brind et al estimated that in 1996 an excess of 5,000 cases of breast cancer were attributable to abortion, and that the annual excess would increase by 500 cases each year. They predicted 25,000 excess cases in the year 2036.

Scientists now deny their own studies

Authors of studies actually denied their own findings when political heat was applied. One lead author of a record-linkage case study in 1989 worked with a group of American Cancer Society (ACS) researchers who reviewed the research. By then 11 of 12 US studies indicated increased risk, but she still stated the research - including her own - was "inconsistent" and that she could not arrive at "definitive conclusions."

Political pressure & scare tactics

The scientific and medical community admits that the reasons for the suppression are political. The president of the American Society of Breast Surgeons said that she

presented her concerns about getting information to the public about the abortion-breast cancer link, but the board felt it was "too political."

The director of the Miami Breast Cancer Conference explained that there was no presentation on the program because it was "too political." The author found that the Web pages of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and leading American and Canadian cancer organizations contain false statements, misrepresentation, and omissions in their discussions. Yet when pressured by scientists to post studies that show a 2.4 fold increase in breast cancer risk, pro-choice activist cried foul, accusing them of using "pro-life scare tactics." Equally astounding is the fact that most of the 15 American studies were funded at least in part by the NCI, and 13 of them found increased risk.

For their efforts to inform women about the studies that the NCI forgot to mention, the Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer was compared to the Taliban in a newspaper.

Another win for the trial lawyers?

In conclusion, the author writes that in the end, it may be the trial lawyers, not the medical community, who force full disclosure through liability litigation against those who perform abortions without providing women with fully informed disclosure about the elevated risk.

NOTE: The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons is a non-partisan, professional association of physicians in all specialties, dedicated since 1943 to protection of the patient-physician relationship.

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