

Buried in pink is a fact about abortion, breast cancer

There have been a number of news articles debating the evidence that abortion is one of the factors that increase a woman's risk of developing breast cancer. In addition to the media's attention to the issue, there has also been a movement in several states to make laws that would require abortion providers to warn their clients about this link. According to the Americans United for Life Legal Guide, five states already have laws requiring abortion providers to warn women about the risk of breast cancer.

Dr. Nancy Snyderman appeared on Good Morning America and challenged these laws by saying, "You're scaring women unnecessarily. When you try to look at what causes breast cancer, it's difficult. We don't know." While breast cancer research continues, there are some facts which are proven. According to The Coalition on Abortion and Breast Cancer, it is not true that all women who have breast cancer have had abortions. It's also untrue that all women who've had abortions will get breast cancer. Induced abortion is only one of the risk factors for the illness. However, it is the most preventable risk factor for breast cancer. This preventable factor is what women deserve to know.

Recent questions and laws about the link between abortion and breast cancer shows the need for clarification. **Breast cancer takes more female lives than any other cancer in the U.S. besides lung cancer.** There are many risk factors that increase a woman's chance of getting breast cancer. Many of these factors, including family history and age, aren't a woman's choice. Fortunately, there are a few factors which increase a woman's chance of getting breast cancer that she can control. One of these factors is induced abortion.

In studies across the United States and in other countries, it has been found that women who have had abortions have a higher chance of getting breast cancer later in life. These are studies that have been done by professionals and are published in respected medical journals. One study, done in 1990, that summarized findings in medical studies from Canada, Denmark, France, Israel, Japan, the United States, and the USSR, found that "abortions, either multiple or occurring before the first full term pregnancy, have been shown to be significantly associated with breast cancer risks."¹ A study done by the National Cancer Institute in Washington found that women who had an abortion increased their risk of getting breast cancer by 50 percent. This risk was more than doubled if the woman's abortion (or first abortion) took place before the age of 18 or over the age of 30.²

The risk is real. This isn't some abstract idea made up by prolife people with no scientific proof. The connection between abortion and breast cancer has been found in numerous scientific studies by medical professionals throughout the world.

If considering a surgery that wasn't physically necessary, wouldn't it be important to know that the surgery could increase the risk for a disease that will kill an estimated more than 40,000 people in 2009.³ Isn't it a woman's right to know that she is putting herself at greater risk for a serious and potentially deadly disease by having an abortion? All women have the right to know the possible consequences of abortion and the link between abortion and breast cancer.

References:

1. Remennick L, (1990), Induced Abortion as a Cancer Risk Factor: A Review of Epidemiological Evidence, *Journal of Epidemiological Community Health*, 44: 259-264.
2. Daling J.R., Malone K.E., Voight L.F., White E., and Weiss N.S., (1994), Risk of Breast Cancer Among Young Women: A Relationship to Individual Abortion, *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, 86: 1584-1592.
3. American Cancer Society