

The letter writers of ***“Recent DI Advertising Supplement Strikingly Inaccurate”*** defend their statement “an abortion does not increase the risk of breast cancer” by citing an American Cancer Society (ACS) page where the U.S. National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) 2003 workshop and three studies (Danish, Harvard, and California Teachers) all claim to refute the abortion-breast cancer (ABC) link.

If they’d viewed the NCI’s online Videocast they’d see that workshop leaders didn’t permit examination of 26 studies supporting an ABC link. They only considered a handful of studies against it. The NCI fails to admit during the 2003 workshop that the Danish Study authors’ finding of the premature birth-breast cancer link is explained by the same hormonal changes accounting for an ABC link. If they’d read the workshop statement, they’d realize the NCI acknowledged one of three ways abortion raises risk - by delaying first full term pregnancy (FFTP). The scientific community widely accepts the conclusions of World Health Organization research that FFTP at age 35 triples breast cancer risk compared to FFTP at age 17. Every one-year delay of FFTP increases risk 3.5%. Therefore the NCI’s conclusion denying an ABC link is contradictory.

Studies cited on the ACS page are three of at least 10 studies repeatedly cited as proof of no ABC link. The ACS does not reveal that these studies excluded the effect of delayed FFTP and only examined a second risk - whether abortion leaves breasts with more places for cancers to start (estrogen related breast growth). Furthermore, experts have identified astonishing methodological flaws invalidating the conclusions in these studies. Dr. Joel Brind’s critique of these studies is available in the following medical journals: Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons, 12/05 and 6/07; International Journal of Cancer, 2/08; Contraception, 3/09. No scientist has refuted Brind’s conclusions. Some examples of these studies’ flaws include:

Danish:

- Misclassified 60,000 women as having NOT had abortions when records indicated they did.
- Used 1973 instead of 1939 as the year abortion was legalized in Denmark.
- Scientists violated the rule of temporality, tracking abortions from a different point in time than the tracking of breast cancer cases.

Harvard:

- Researchers did not allow sufficient follow-up time between exposure to abortion and development of breast cancer.
- Excluded cases of in situ breast cancer, which show up sooner than do cases of invasive breast cancer.
- Did not adjust for miscarriages, having the effect of lowering risk, statistically.

California Teachers

- Nearly one in five women with breast cancer in the study were counted as not having breast cancer.

- Did not compare pregnant women who aborted to pregnant women who carried pregnancies to term. Because of the permanent changes in the breast from pregnancy, pregnant women who abort should be compared to pregnant women who give birth after a full term pregnancy.

Dr. Leslie Bernstein, a senior author in this study, has a deep-seated dislike for ABC link, and has stated she doesn't want the issue relating to induced abortion to breast cancer risk to be part of the discussion.

The American Cancer Society is part of a larger community of breast cancer researchers/fundraisers that mislead, deceive, or otherwise ignore evidence regarding the ABC link. Therefore, to understand the whole story one must look further than the ACS or the NCI for information on the ABC link. A good place to start would be the **Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer**.

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