

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5836  
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2005  
RISK ASSOCIATED WITH ORAL CONTRACENPTIVE  
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**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the use of oral contraceptive increases the possibility of brain stroke;
- (b) if so, the details of studies conducted in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps as a measure of warning to deal with this situation; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE ( SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b) The World Health Organization (WHO) has conducted a large multi national case control study to evaluate the effects of oral contraceptives on venous thromboembolism, stroke and myocardial infarction in 21 centres in 17 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. One of the objectives of the study was to determine if there was an association between currently available hormonal contraceptives and cardio vascular disease. The study had concluded ` there is little risk of stroke for health young women who were using oral contraceptives`. On the other hand in women in the age group of over 35 years, there was a small, though distinct increase in cardiovascular risk. Women who are above the age of 35 years, overweight, with smoking habits and those with history of high blood pressure during pregnancy are at a slightly higher risk of formation of blood clots in the veins (compared to those women who do not have these problems). The WHO in their study report has stated that they believe that oral contraceptive pills are safe in vast majority of women. However, it has recommended that women with high blood pressure should avoid use of hormone containing contraceptive pills.

(c) & (d) The Oral Contraceptive Pills supplied by Govt. of India under the National Family Welfare Programme is a low dose pill (30 ug), which is less likely to be associated with increased risk of stroke. The guidelines of Govt of India on oral contraceptive pills specify that a detailed history and clinical examination of women should be done to exclude risk factors before Oral Contraceptive Pill use. It should be avoided in women above 35 years with smoking habits and those with other high risk factors such as cardio- vascular disease, thromboembolic disorders, liver tumours, breast cancer, undiagnosed abnormal bleeding etc.