

ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES AND INTRAUTERINE DEVICES AS RISK FACTORS FOR BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCERS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

ABSTRACT

Breast and cervical cancers have commandingly become major public health threats across the world. While studies have reported on the nexus between the use of oral contraceptives (OCs) and intrauterine devices (IUDs) as risk factors for breast and cervical cancers, there exists a paucity of explicit data on the nature of the association. Authors report the effect of oral contraceptives and the use of IUDs on the development of breast and cervical cancers. Several databases (Cochrane Library, Google Scholar and PubMed) were searched using well-specified criteria and a total of 15 papers selected. Meta-analyses, systematic reviews and studies that used cross-sectional designs were excluded from the review. Three and twelve cohort and case-control studies were reviewed respectively. Four of these studies reported an increased association between oral contraceptives and the risk of cervical cancer while nine showed positive correlation between oral contraceptives and risk of breast cancer. One study showed association between levonogestrel IUDs and risk of breast cancer while the other study did not show association between both levonogestrel and copper IUDs with risk of breast cancer. Use of copper IUDs was associated with diminishing risk of cervical cancer. Overall, use of oral contraceptives upsurges risk of breast and cervical cancers especially when used for longer periods of time. Further studies should therefore be done to understand the mechanisms of action of oral contraceptives and IUDs on the development of both cancers.

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Track Classification: Innovations in Cancer Research & Immunotherapy