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MailOnline

Abortion 'triples breast cancer risk': Fourth study finds terminations linked to disease

By [Simon Caldwell](#)

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The study showed having an abortion could triple the risk of breast cancer, however it was a small sample of 300 women

An abortion can triple a woman's risk of developing breast cancer in later life, researchers say.

A team of scientists made the claim while carrying out research into how breastfeeding can protect women from developing the killer disease.

While concluding that breastfeeding offered significant protection from cancer, they also noted that the highest reported risk factor in developing the disease was abortion.

Other factors included the onset of the menopause and smoking.

The findings, published in the journal *Cancer Epidemiology*, are the latest research to show a link between abortion and breast cancer.

The research was carried out by scientists at the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka.

It is the fourth epidemiological study to report such a link in the past 14 months, with research in China, Turkey and the U.S. showing similar conclusions.

But Cancer Research UK questioned the accuracy of the figures and said women should not be unduly worried.

Dr Kat Arney, the charity's science information manager, said: 'This is a very small study of only 300 women, so there are likely to be statistical errors in a sample of this size.'

'Much larger studies involving tens of thousands of women have shown no significant links.'

But the findings prompted accusations that women in Britain are not being properly informed of the dangers of abortion.

Professor Jack Scarisbrick, the chairman of Life, a pregnancy counselling charity, said: 'This is devastating new evidence of the abortion-breast cancer link.'

'We have encountered from the pro-abortion lobby manipulation of the evidence on a truly disgraceful scale. This study is further evidence that has been gathering from all around the world that abortion is a major risk factor for breast cancer.'

'When will the (medical) establishment face up to this fact and pull its head out of the sand?'

'It is betraying women by failing to warn that what they are doing to their bodies – the quick fix of abortion – can do grave harm.'

Although the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has acknowledged the possibility of an abortion-breast cancer link, most medical professionals in Britain remain unconvinced.

This is because an international study led by Oxford University concluded in 2004 that having an abortion does not heighten a woman's risk.

Some scientists say, however, that the Oxford research was flawed because many of the women studied were too young to have developed the disease.

Those who believe there is a link say breast cancer is caused by high levels of oestradiol, a hormone that stimulates breast growth during pregnancy.

Its effects are minimised in women who take pregnancy to full term but it remains at dangerous levels in those who have abortions.

There has been an 80 per cent increase in the rate of breast cancer since 1971, when in the wake of the Abortion Act, the number of abortions rose from 18,000 to nearly 200,000 a year.

Earlier this year, Dr Louise Brinton, a senior researcher with the U.S. National Cancer Institute who did not accept the link, reversed her position to say she was now convinced abortion increased the risk of breast cancer by about 40 per cent.

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I heard a cancer researcher say, only two days ago, that the best preventative measure for breast cancer was having children at 14 years old. I doubt we'll see anyone advocating that any time soon. Therefore, I suspect that this is another case of two groups (pro-life and pro-choice) picking and choosing statistics to back their own agenda.

However, if there is a possibility of a link - and it appears there is a possibility - then it should be told to those who are considering

having an abortion. It may only be a small increase in risk for most people but for someone with higher risk e.g. who has family history of breast cancer and also smokes, it may be an extra risk factor too many.

Don't let ideological agendas get in the way of informing the woman making the choice - that goes for both sides of this emotive debate.

- Bob, London, 24/6/2010 11:30

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this can also apply to women that have premature births.

I had a very premature baby in 1995, and a year later developed breast cancer at the age of 35, the consultant told me there was a link then.

- SS, Bristol, England, 24/6/2010 10:18

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This sounds very dubious. I cannot believe that the body knows the difference between an abortion and a miscarriage.

Many pregnancies end in miscarriage, often so early that the women doesn't even realise she was pregnant. The number of abortions may have risen, but presumably the number of miscarriages across the population would have dropped, as better contraception means fewer pregnancies to miscarry.

There have been many other significant changes to women's lifestyles - diet, sexual behaviour, contraception, etc - since the 70s, so I cannot see how this small study can have shown anything.

- Abbi, Guernsey, 24/6/2010 09:34

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What irritates me about this type of research is that it has a moral agenda where medical research should be unbiased. If the researchers wanted to prove that exposure to estradiol in women who do not have full term pregnancies is a risk factor for breast cancer they should have equally looked at women who miscarried without ever having children. That would be a very logical inclusion in the study. Why was it omitted? This type of research is just fodder for the antiabortion zealots who will use it to promote their agenda.

- Hmmm, Over here, 24/6/2010 09:21

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This is a non story. 300 women, and "abortion". So what about the women who HAVE babies but don't breastfeed, miscarriages & such-like... Yet again, anti-abortionists scaremongering.

- Sam, Derby, 24/6/2010 09:19

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How about the increased risk of breast cancer and the link between increased alcohol consumption by women over the past 15 years or so. Young women don't realise that they are increasing their risk of developing breast cancer by having more than 2

standard drinks (of 100mls each) per day. Studies show that more than 200mls of alcohol per day raise the risk of getting breast cancer.

- Lynda, Auckland New Zealand, 24/6/2010 08:26

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