



Research to replace 'pill'

by Joann Ackerman
Nebraskan Staff Writer

The pill is only a beginning. Laboratories and universities are researching new methods of contraception, methods which will be simpler to use than the pill and which will improve upon the intra-uterine devices (IUD).

One-a-day pills, birth control shots, one capsule which would give years of contraceptive protection, a "morning-after" pill and sperm-inhibiting drugs for males are being developed.

WITH THE one-a-day pills now being clinically tested, there no longer will be the possibility of missing a pill by carelessness in counting 20 days on, stopping and starting another cycle. The "mini-pill" contains a

low dose of a synthetic progesterone hormone and is taken daily.

Two pharmaceutical companies are planning to market birth control shots. The Upjohn Co. has applied for U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval of a synthetic progesterone drug, similar to the one used in birth control pills.

The drug would be injected into muscle tissue and slowly seep into the bloodstream. The injection would be required once every three months. E. R. Squibb & Sons are testing a once-a-month injection.

A CAPSULE which could turn a woman's entire fertile lifetime into a "safe period," is being tested. The capsule containing a one-year or 20-year supply of contraceptive hormones would be implanted under the skin to provide a slow release of hormones into the system. If pregnancy were desired, it could be removed.

A "morning-after" pill is being investigated. Researchers have found that large doses of estrogen will prevent a fertilized egg from becoming implanted in the uterus. The method has been used successfully in cases of rape or incest, though severe side effects such as bleeding and nausea result when the drug is used in this way.

Researchers are trying to improve the IUD's. One possibility is a magnetized IUD which will register on a small detecting device. This would be a quick way to check the IUD's placement.

FOR THE MALES, researchers are looking for safe, reversible ways to inhibit sperm production. One approach is to develop for the male a capsule similar to the one being developed for the female. The capsule would be implanted under the skin and would slowly release tiny doses of a sperm-inhibiting drug.

To date such a drug has not been found. One compound was successful in making prison volunteers sterile, but there was one undesirable side effect. If the male has even one alcoholic drink, the drug produces severe vomiting, a drop in blood pressure and giddiness.

Other contraceptive ideas which are future possibilities include:

- a drug which activates uterine muscles in the way that an IUD apparently does.
- a vaccine to inoculate a male against his own sperm or to inoculate a female against her husband's sperm.
- a way to keep the female's cervical mucus viscous enough to block sperm.
- a way to keep women infertile except when conception was desired, perhaps with the use of a fertility pill or shot.

Unwed mothers agencies . . .

'One mistake not the end'

by Sue Schlichtemeier
Nebraskan Staff Writer

Approximately a quarter of a million babies are reported born out of wedlock in the United States each year, many to teenagers and young women in their early twenties.

Last year, in Nebraska, state statistics show 1,955 unwed mothers: 1,028 from Douglas County, 181 from Lancaster County, 586 from all other Nebraska counties and 160 from out-of-state.

ON A STATEWIDE basis, the most common age is 19-20. Twenty-three of the 1,955 unwed mothers were younger than 14, 337 were in the 17-18 bracket, 404 in the 19-20 bracket, 305 were 21-22 and 20 were over 40.

Miss Gretta Hagemann of the State Welfare Department, Children and Family Services, commented that the facilities for unwed mothers in Nebraska are adequate in themselves, but there are not enough. More are needed for the lower income woman. Also, it would be helpful if facilities were sprinkled geographically across the state, she said.

She added that more experienced and interested case workers were needed to counsel the girls and help make their readjustment to society easier.

THE TWO major types of facilities for unwed mothers are homes and agencies. The only two licensed maternity homes in Nebraska are the Child Savings Institute and the Booth Memorial Hospital, both in Omaha. There are about eight licensed agencies in the state — all in Lincoln and Omaha.

The Booth Memorial Hospital provides medical, social, religious and educational services for its 27-30 patients. The medical program includes pre-natal,

delivery and post partum care. It is affiliated with the University of Nebraska School of Medicine.

Social activities include parties, programs, field trips, piano, organ, radio, colored television, craft classes, a sewing room and library. During good weather, picnics, volleyball, badminton and croquet entertain the women.

The religious program includes required Sunday morning chapel services and weekly vesper services. The opportunity to confer with the pastor or priest of a girl's choice may be arranged, and participation in a choir and Bible class is encouraged.

HIGH SCHOOL and college courses may be obtained for a fee from the University of Nebraska Extension Division. Classroom instruction in high school English and social studies is available through the courtesy of Marian High School.

Miss Hagemann said that every girl experiences some emotional effects from being an unwed mother, but case workers work closely with them long before the baby is born, if possible, to help them gain the courage and will to re-enter society. She said that the mother's family can play a large part in this adjustment if they will look at the problem in the proper perspective.

Another social worker said that most girls first turn to their best friend, next to a doctor and finally to their family.

"THIS IS sad, because this is a time when a girl's mother can probably be the most helpful person she knows," she said.

Miss Hagemann's suggestion as the most vital factor in lowering the number of unwed mothers is early education . . . getting away from this Puritan attitude.

Birth control liberates 20th century woman

Continued from page 2

These methods are considered less reliable than the foams, jellies and cremes already mentioned.

Rhythm method

THE RHYTHM method of contraception, which is the only method permitted by the Roman Catholic Church, requires abstinence from intercourse just before and after ovulation occurs.

This is the period during which the egg could be fertilized by the sperm. In theory, there are three fertile days in each cycle since the life of a sperm is about 48 hours and the egg can unite with the sperm only during the 24 hours after its release from the ovary.

The problem is determining when ovulation occurs. This requires an accurate 12-month record of the female's menstrual cycles or a record of her daily temperature or both.

Ovulation usually occurs between the twelfth and sixteenth days of the cycle. A calendar system has been devised to determine the time of possible fertility. The formula is to subtract eighteen days from the shortest (25 day) cycle occurring during the 12 months that

the record has been kept and subtract 11 days from the longest (31 days) cycle. The result for a woman with this range means abstaining from the seventh to the twentieth day of the cycle.

THE METHOD is not recommended for women with irregular cycles since predicting ovulation is more difficult. If the longest cycle is more than 10 days longer than the shortest one, it makes the safe period very short. Also, the regularity of a cycle may be altered because of a physical or emotional upset, a change in climate, illness or other changes.

A daily basal temperature reading is helpful in determining ovulation. A slight drop in temperature followed by a rise above normal during the rest of the month usually occurs at midcycle when an egg is released from the ovary. By taking her temperature, a woman can determine when ovulation occurred and shorten her period of abstinence accordingly. The calendar formula is still needed to mark the beginning of the fertile period.

The temperature reading must be taken immediately after waking in the morning since this is when body temperature is lowest. For easier reading, an ovulation thermometer, which registers only from 96 to 100 degrees, can be bought in most drugstores.

Besides the record keeping duties for the female, the method requires the strong motivation of both partners. There is an old joke which gives a name to couples using the rhythm method — they are called parents.

On campus today

Dr. Francisco Huerta, chairman of the Liberal Party of Ecuador and vice chairman of the City Council of Guayaquil, is arriving in Lincoln on March 30, according to Roberto Esquenazi-Mayo, chairman of the department of romance languages and literatures.

Huerta will hold a press conference at 9:30 a.m. March 31 in Oldfather Hall, room 713.

★ ★ ★
Lincoln residents may register to vote in the city primary and general elections at the Election Commissioner's Office until March 28, according to election commission officials.

★ ★ ★
Since the city primary will be held during Easter Vacation, those who will be out of town may vote between March 24 and April 5 in the Election Commissioner's Office, 10th and O Sts.

★ ★ ★
University coeds will vote Friday in an all-campus referendum on proposed amendments to the AWS Constitution. Women will vote in their living units, with Monday set aside as the day for off-campus women to vote in the Nebraska Union.

★ ★ ★
A vote by thirty per cent of the women students is necessary for passage of the referendum.

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Wed., April 2, 7:00 P.M.

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Miscellaneous:

Reading Dynamics classes. April Series begins April 3, 7:00 p.m. For information, call Bob Henderson 435-8359 or 435-2146.

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