

Medical community questions contraceptive's usefulness

By Kim Wilt

A new contraceptive, claimed by the manufacturer to be "so effective and easy to use that hundreds of thousands have found it the preferred contraceptive" has been causing some questions within the medical community.

Encare Oval, a vaginal insert containing the sperm-killing ingredient nonoxynol 9, is being sold in drugstores and pharmacies in Lincoln.

Pharmacists at both K-Ray Pharmacy and Walgreen Drug said Encare Oval is sold at their stores. Both agreed that the contraceptive was probably as effective as contraceptive foam or cream.

"It has the same ingredients as Delfen foam," the pharmacist at K-Ray pharmacy said.

"It cannot be as effective (as claimed) because often it is not used according to directions," the Walgreen Drug pharmacist said. "It's a little less messy than foam or cream," he said, but otherwise it is the same.

Be realistic

He estimated that Encare Oval is probably 100 percent effective if used correctly, but is realistically closer to being 90 to 95 percent effective.

A pharmacist at the University Health Center said the pharmacy does not stock Encare Oval because "the statistics show that it is not more effective than a condom on contraceptive cream or jelly."

She said the effectiveness of Encare Oval was probably comparable to cream used alone, which she said was approximately 90 percent effective.

"We don't usually recommend just cream or jelly used alone," she said.

If a condom is used with foam or cream, she said, the rate of effectiveness rises to approximately 90 to 95 percent, she said, and this could be comparable to Encare Oval used with a condom.

consumer byline

A clinic counselor at Planned Parenthood of Lincoln said the clinic does recommend the use of Encare Oval. She agreed that it was probably as effective as foam—which, she said, was 97 percent effective if used every time.

Advice given

When women come in for birth control counseling, she said, "we tell them to use the contraceptive cream with a condom."

The main attractions of Encare Oval as opposed to foam are its convenience. Because it does not require an applicator, it is easy to use, she said.

Eaton-Merz Laboratories, the manufacturers, have tested the product in West Germany, she said, and have claimed that the product is 99 percent effective—used without a condom. However, she said, "We don't know when the study was done, when the women were tested,

or what population was tested."

She said that an independent firm is currently testing the product in the United States, but no results are available yet.

Regarding the effectiveness of Encare Oval, she said, "there are two types of effectiveness." The first type is theoretical use—if the product is used properly every time, and if it is used every time a couple has intercourse. Foam would be 97 percent effective in this type, she said, as would Encare Oval.

The second type of effectiveness is actual use, she said, and foam (and Encare Oval) are approximately 99 percent effective in this category, she said.

The manufacturer is claiming the product is 99 percent effective in actual use, she said.

Journalism school VDT plan depends on fund-raising

The arrival of video display terminals, for classes in the UNL School of Journalism will depend on financing and a decision of which system to buy, according to a journalism professor.

"When we get the VDTs depends entirely upon fund raising and negotiations with suppliers," said Mike Stricklin, assistant professor of journalism. Approximately \$85,000 has been received toward the goal of \$200,000. The tentative date for acquiring VDTs is fall 1979.

"The main goal we have for the VDTs is to use the equipment in existing courses such as beginning reporting and typography, instead of making new courses," he said.

"This is a slower but better process for a more sophisticated system," he said.

"We are going to get the system all at once instead of piece by piece," said Neale Copple, director of the School of Journalism.

"The reason for this is because technology develops so fast and we want to have a complete and updated system," Copple said. Copple says he expects to have approximately 30 terminals in the entire system.

According to Stricklin, a faculty planning committee has been set up to deal with long-term responsibilities in making UNL's VDTs a model system.

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