

NFP is a way of following God's plan for achieving and/or avoiding pregnancy. It consists of...

## June 2025 Newsletter

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Dear Dcn. Wackerly,

Last month there were two excellent researches showing the benefits of breastfeeding and the dangers of the combined contraceptive pill.

New research reveals that extended breastfeeding benefits infants and helps adolescents build stronger brains and sharper thinking, highlighting the long-term value of following global breastfeeding recommendations, reports Hugo DeSouza.

In a **recent study published in the journal Pediatric Research**, researchers conducted a longitudinal association study to investigate the relationship between the duration of breastfeeding and adolescent neurocognitive outcomes.

The present study establishes the long-term benefits of extended breastfeeding durations, revealing that they endure beyond early life and potentially critically mediate adolescent-stage brain remodelling. Increased breastfeeding durations were found to benefit cortical thickness and surface area, which are known to protect against age-associated neurocognitive decline and psychiatric disorders. Cortical myelin and fluid cognition also presented dose-dependent associations with breastfeeding, highlighting the latter's role in efficient neural communication and holistic cognitive capacity.

Importantly, these findings reinforce and align with existing public health recommendations that support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding up to two years or longer, as optimal for child neurodevelopment.

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According to health reporter Isabel Shaw, the combined contraceptive pill has been linked to tripling the risk of sudden stroke in young women, a new study has revealed.

She states that it is already well established that the pill, taken by over 3 million women in the UK, can increase the risk of blood clots and heart issues.

Researchers from Istanbul University looked at 268 women aged 18 to 49 who had sudden, unexplained strokes, and compared them to 268 women of the same age who hadn't had a stroke.

Among those who had strokes, 66 were using the combined contraceptive pill compared to just 38 in the control group. After accounting for factors like smoking, high blood pressure, migraines and obesity, they found women on the pill were three times more likely to suffer a cryptogenic stroke.

The combined pill contains estrogen and progestogen - and it's the estrogen that's been linked to a higher risk of blood clots, which can lead to strokes.

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Of course, NFP users don't have to worry about any of the Pill's negative effects. And those who ecologically breastfeed their children experience, on average, 14.5 months of natural amenorrhea (absence of menstruation).

Steve Craig  
Executive Director