Women on Hormonal Contraceptives Advised to Use Condoms to Prevent HIV

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The World Health Organization (WHO) is trying to settle a four-month-old controversy by affirming in its guidelines the safety of injectable hormonal contraceptives, while also cautioning women to use condoms to prevent HIV, PlusNews reports. A WHO investigation into the safety of certain types of hormonal contraceptives was sparked by an October 2011 study in The Lancet that suggested that there may be a twofold risk of HIV among women using progesterone-only birth control, such as Depo-Provera, commonly used in sub-Saharan Africa. After a thorough investigation, a group of experts convened by WHO found the Lancet study inconclusive—specifically, they could find no proven medical link between hormonal contraception and increased HIV risk. However, experts strongly advised women on hormonal contraception to use condoms concurrently to prevent HIV.

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