

# Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

January 22, 2012

Dad



Mom



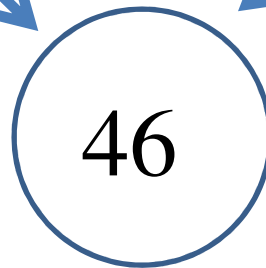
46

Chromosomes  
in each cell of  
the body

Sperm  
Cell



Egg



**Fertilization**

A Living Blue Print

“In fourteen years as a pastor, doing considerable premarital counseling, I always warned couples against the IUD because I’d read it causes early abortions. I typically recommended young couples use the Pill because of its relative ease and effectiveness.”

At the time I incorrectly believed that “low-dose” birth control pills were the exception, not the rule. I thought most people who took the Pill were in no danger of having abortions. What I’ve found in my recent research is that since 1988 virtually all oral contraceptives used in America are low-dose, that is, they contain much lower levels of estrogen than the earlier birth control pills.

What is now considered a “high dose” of estrogen is 50 micrograms, which is in fact a very low dose in comparison to the 150 micrograms once standard for the Pill. The “low-dose” pills of today are mostly 20-35 micrograms.

In summary ... there are **not one but three mechanisms of birth control pills**: 1) inhibiting ovulation (the primary mechanism), 2) thickening the cervical mucus, thereby making it more difficult for sperm to travel to the egg, and 3) thinning and shriveling the lining of the uterus to the point that it is unable or less able to facilitate the implantation of the newly-fertilized egg. **The first two mechanisms are contraceptive. The third is abortive.**

# When Are You Pregnant?

Historically, the terms conception and fertilization have been virtually synonymous, both referring to the very beginning of human life. A contraceptive, then, just as it sounds, was something that prevented fertilization (i.e. contradicted conception).

Unfortunately, in the last few decades alternative meanings of “conception” and “contraception” have emerged, which have greatly confused the issue.

Eugene F. Diamond, M.D., wrote an excellent article in Focus on the Family’s *Physician* magazine. Dr. Diamond states:



Prior to 1976, a “contraceptive” was understood to be an agent that prevented the union of sperm and ovum. In 1976 the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), realizing that this definition didn’t help its political agenda, arbitrarily changed the definition.

A contraceptive now meant anything that prevented implantation of the blastocyst, which occurs six or seven days after fertilization. Conception, as defined by *Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary* (27<sup>th</sup> Edition), became “the onset of pregnancy marked by implantation of the blastocyst.”

The hidden agenda in ACOG's redefinition of "contraceptive" was to blur the distinction between agents preventing fertilization and those preventing implantation of the week-old embryo. Specifically, abortifacients such as IUDs, combination pills, minipills, progestin-only pills, injectables such as Provera and, more recently, implantables such as Norplant, all are contraceptives by this definition.