

Effects of combined low estrogen oral contraceptive pills on migraine and tension headaches

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Millions of women in the world use oral contraceptive pills (OCPs). On the other hand %16 to %19 of women suffer from migraine and many of them have tension headaches. These women may wonder whether the consumption of OCPs is harmful for them. This study carried out to determine the effects of combined low estrogen oral contraceptive pills on migraine and tension headaches.

Materials and Methods: This case control study was done on 344 women which referred to health care centers in Mashhad, Iran during 2009. Case group include 244 women which consumed oral contraceptive for at least three month. 100 women without OCPs consumption were considered as control group. The criteria of International Headache Society for migraine and tension headaches were used to diagnose headache. The severity and the frequency of headaches before and after the consumption of OCP were recorded. Data was analyzed by Chi-Square, Fisher exact, Logistic regression and Wilcoxon tests.

Results: The frequency of migraine headache was 5% and 6% in case and control groups respectively. This different was not significant (OR=0.88, 95%CI: 0.3-2.69, P=0.804). The frequency of tension headache in cases and controls was 12% and 10%, respectively. This different was not significant (OR=1.26, 95%CI: 0.56-2.86, P=0.055).

Conclusion: This study showed that the consumption of OCPs, has no effects on the advent of migraine and tension headaches and do not increase the rate and severity of the attacks.

Keywords: Oral Contraceptive, Migraine, Tension headache

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