

Combination Estrogen-Progestin Oral Contraceptives

Benefits

- ❖ Ovarian cancer risk reduced (50%)
- ❖ Endometrial cancer risk reduced
- ❖ Acne severity reduced
- ❖ Menstrual blood loss reduced

Risks

- ❖ *Myocardial infarction**
- ❖ *Stroke**
- (* 2-5 times when combination OCPs are combined with smoking or hypertension)
- ❖ *Venous thromboembolism*
- (3-4-fold increase in risk)
- ❖ *Cerebral venous thrombosis*

Summary of Guidelines for use of Combination Estrogen-Progestin Oral Contraceptives in Women with High Risk Characteristics

(from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the World Health Organization)

1. Smoker older than 35 years- risks unacceptable
2. Hypertension controlled with medication- risks may outweigh benefits, individualize decision
3. Hypertension controlled with medication- risks unacceptable
4. Migraine headaches and age greater than 35 years- risks may outweigh benefits, individualize
5. Migraine headaches with focal symptoms- risks unacceptable
6. Breast cancer, past or current- risks unacceptable
7. **History of blood clot- risks unacceptable**

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- ❑ Family history has a poor predictive value for thrombophilic gene defects.
 - ❑ Screening for thrombophilia is not routinely recommended.
 - ❑ **When a thrombophilia is known to be present in a women with no prior history of a blood clot, the decision to use of combination OCPs must be individualized considering the specific patient-related risks and benefits.**