

The connection between abortion and mental health

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The Connection Between Abortion and Mental Health Mary Kate Fletcher

Psychology The Connection between Abortion and Mental Health Do

abortions really have short and long term side effects on woman? This is the question many people wonder about, but a lot of people do not know the answer. It is said that by the age of 45, two out of every five woman have had an abortion procedure. In the United States, there has been 1, 300, 00 abortions annually performed. Many people do not realize the side effects having an abortion can cause. Many time young teenage girls are pressured by their boyfriends or parents to have one, without truly understanding the emotional baggage that can haunt you afterwards. In some cases, it may be the appropriate thing to do, but I do believe everyone should at least research it more to find out if it really is the right decision for them. The abortion procedure can cause short-term side effects as well as long-term side effects. Some of the short- term side effects are frequent uterine pain, excessive uterine bleeding, pelvic infection, ruptured ectopic pregnancy, incomplete abortion, vomiting, and in some extreme cases, death. These side effects can be very dangerous and even fatal, which is why they need to be taken seriously and woman but research and think through their options thoroughly as well. As well as short-term side effects, there are also long-term side effects linked to abortions. Many woman who have had abortions, have substance abuse problems. They feel lost or alone about having the abortion and need an “ escape" or way out from this pain. This does not happen to all women who have experienced an abortion, but it is a risk factor. Another long-term side effect could be an increased risk of getting breast cancer. Carrying a baby through a full term pregnancy actually lowers

the risk of getting breast cancer than someone who has never gotten pregnant. However, when the pregnancy is ended, the levels of estrogen drop, causing an increase of cell multiplication. A study by the United State National Cancer Institute states, " woman who have had an induced abortion have a 50% risk of getting breast cancer by the age of 45 (Gospel). " Is having a 50% greater risk of getting breast cancer really worth it? This is a question women should consider before they make a final decision. Infertility is another long-term side effect that most women do not even consider. Many often get pregnant before they are ready to have kids or are too young. These reasons are appropriate reasons, but some woman will not be able to have another opportunity to conceive again. This could be very devastating for some woman, which is why they need to weigh out their options extremely carefully. Post-abortion syndrome is a side effect as well. This happens immediately after a woman gets an abortion and right after she wanted to conceive again to replace the baby she just aborted. This is complicated because her circumstances for aborting the baby in the first place have not changed at all, so the there was really no point to have the abortion. Many times after the second baby is born, the mothers have a hard time bonding with him/her because they still feel guilt from aborting the first baby. Another study made this connection with abortion and mental health. They say, " abortion was linked with a 4 percent greater chance of anxiety disorders, a 37 percent higher possibility of depression, a more than double risk of alcohol abuse — 110 percent — a three times greater risk of cannabis use — at 220 percent — and 155 percent greater risk of trying to commit suicide (Telegraph). " These numbers are extremely high and very

dangerous. This is why women need to do their research and make sure it is something they really want to do. The reasons for thinking about and getting an abortion differ for every woman. Some of the most common reasons are age, teenagers who cannot support the baby, pressure from parents or boyfriend, or financial instability. A teenager who becomes pregnant feels lost and alone, and feels like her only way out is to get an abortion. Some people even say that women who abort are dishonest and disrespectful. This is not a true statement what so ever. Abortion is usually not a selfish act; it is really a very unselfish one. The reason they choose to do this is because they cannot take care of the baby themselves and probably cannot afford the hospital bills to have the baby and chose adoption. There are however some studies and people that think differently about the connection between abortion and mental health. They say that abortion has no effect on a woman's mental state. Susan A. Cohen states, " Given the millions of women who have had abortions, " if severe reaction were common, there would be an epidemic of women seeking treatment (GPR)." This could be true, I believe there is some women who do need to seek treatment and who do obtain mental health problems from it. It does depend on the person and what other factors might contribute. Such as whether or not the woman who received the abortion had previous trauma in her life or other mental health problems to begin with. The APA found that, " women who are terminating pregnancies that are wanted or who lack support from their partner or parents for the abortion may feel a greater sense of loss, anxiety and distress. For most women, however, the time of greatest distress is likely to be before an abortion; after an abortion, women frequently report feeling

'relief and happiness (GPR). " The lack of support from parents, family, and friends is a huge factor as to why women go forth with the abortion. If more women had the support from loved ones, I'm sure there would be a big decrease in the amount of abortions performed each year. The Koop investigation also states that they did not find any proven evidence of the connection between abortions and metal health problems. Even though some women may have mental health problems after the abortion procedure, they say it usually is from other underlying factors. Not just abortion alone, but adoption and raising a child under unfit circumstances could also be very upsetting and cause mental health complications. Regardless the situation, each decision is hard and should be thought out properly and with enough time to make the appropriate decision every individual's personal situation. References Barnes, Sarah. " The Long Term Effects of Abortion on Women." The-Gospel. org. Dorries, Nadine. " Abortion Increases Risk of Mental Health Problems, New Research Found." The Telegraph 1 Sept. 2011 Coleman, Priscilla. " The Truth: Abortion Prompts Women's Mental Health Problems." LifeNews. com. 12 Mar. 2012. Cohen, Susan A. " Abortion and Mental Health: Myths and Realities." Guttmacher Institute. GPR, 2006.