

Anup, a dinner party in new york,

[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



Anup, age 27, and Keerthi, age 23- “ One year ago we got married. Ours was an arranged marriage. In the beginning, we barely knew each other. We wanted to know each other better, wanted to spend quality time with each other and in addition to that we had our respective careers to look after. So, we decided to not have children for some time. I decided to take pills as a contraceptive option. I like it because it’s a short-term birth control option and it overall helps in keeping my cycle regular” says Keerthi. Like Anup and Keerthi, there are millions of couples out there who use contraceptive pills as a birth control option.

Before going further on the lab to life story of our hero that is pills, let us have a view in general that what birth control is, what are its types and what are its advantages. •Birth control Also known as contraceptive and fertility control, is a method that individuals and couples adopt in order to prevent pregnancy. It has been in use since ancient times but its importance now is widely accepted and new, safe, effective and easy birth control options are emerging out day by day. •Types- 1.

Barrier- such as condoms and diaphragm 2. Hormonal- such as the pills or the patches 3. Intra uterine devices- long acting reversible contraception such as Copper T 4. Sterilization- such as Vasectomy 5. Natural- such as lactational amenorrhea or periodic abstinence 6. Emergency- such as I pill taken after intercourse within 72 hours •Advantages 1. It prevents unwanted pregnancy. 2.

It helps in family planning. 3. Barrier methods such as condom helps in preventing sexually transmitted diseases. CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS – FROM LAB

TO LIFE Ancient Egyptian women used a combination of cotton, dates, honey and acacia as a suppository because it was believed that acacia had spermicidal effects. But it was only around 1915 that Margaret Sanger (Sept 14, 1879- Sept 6, 1966)- a activist, sex educator, writer and nurse finally settled the quest for a safe and effective oral contraceptive. She opened the first birth control clinic in Brownsville, Brooklyn and started the American Birth Control League which later became Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Now, around 1930s Gregory Pincus creates a test tube rabbit. In 1950s Sanger and Pincus meet at a dinner party in New York, where Sanger persuades Pincus to create a birth control pill.

Pincus comes in contact with a gynaecologist Dr. John Rock(1890-1984) who was researching on chemical contraception in women. Around the same time Frank Colton was working on the development of synthetic progesterone. Katherine Dexter McCormick finally threw the financial support behind the research. Sanger was thus the activist, Pincus and John Rock being the scientist and Katherine being the financial support.

1956- With the efforts of all these people, the first clinical trial was conducted on the patients of Dr. John Rock in his private practice. After considering many places such as Japan, New York, Hawaii and India, the large scale clinical trials of the pill was conducted on women in Puerto Rico. 221 women in Puerto Rico had taken the pill in 2 clinical trials.

Thousands more in Australia, Britain Hong Kong, Japan, Los Angeles , Mexico city and Seattle were involved in clinical trials. But reports on only 897 women was submitted for FDA approval by Searle (a company that

supported George P Pincus' research for many years)(These numbers are very small as compared to the norms of today but at that time these small numbers in clinical trials was not that uncommon.)1957- The FDA approves the use of pills to regulate menstruation but not as a contraceptive June 23 1960 -The pill is approved for its contraceptive use. It approves the sale of Enovid (the first brand) an oral contraceptive, manufactured by G. D Searle and company.

Enovid had 10, 000 micrograms of progestin and 20 to 50 micrograms of estrogen. 1960 -65- Millions of American women are on the pill making it the most popular form of birth control. But the path was not easy. Barbara seaman, Gaylord Nelson and Hugh Davis among many others served as the roadblocks.

Seaman published The Doctors Case Against The Pill in 1969 . In that book she gave a sensationalised account of 100s of women who were suffering adverse side effects due to the pill. It prompted Senator Gaylord Nelson to hold hearings whether the pill was dangerous for the human body and Hugh Davis, a gynaecologist who had a financial stake in the development of IUDs gave full support to Seamans' book on pills.

During 70s there are senate hearings on the safety of pills and sales of the pill drop by 24%. But many still believed that benefits of pills far outweighed their side effects. For them these pills symbolised freedom. Loretta Lyn sang in her hit song of 1975- " the Pill"

THE PILL- BY LORETTA LYNYou wined me and denied me when I was you girlTold me if I'd be your wife you'd show me the worldBut all I've seen of

this old world is a bed and a doctor bill'm tearin' down your brooder house
because now I've got the pillAll these years I've stayed at home while you
had all your funAnd every years that's gone by another baby's comeThere's
gonna be some changes made right here on nursery hillYou've set this
chicken your last time cause now I've got the pillThis old maternity dress I've
got is going in the garbageThe clothes I'm wearing from now on won't take
up so much yardageMiniskirts hot pants and a few little fancy frillsYeah I'm
making up for all those years since I've got the pillI'm tired of all your
crowing how you and your hens playWhile holding a couple in my arms
another's on the wayThis chicken's done for up her nest and ready to make a
dealAnd you can't afford to turn it down cause you know I've got the pillThis
incubator is overused because you've kept it filledThe feeling good time's
easy now since I've got the pillIt's gettin' dark it's roostin' time and that's too
good to be realOh daddy don't you worry now cause momma's got the pillOh
daddy don't you worry now cause momma's got the pill 1988- The high dose
pills are taken off the market but FDA shows health benefits of the newer
pills. Current scenario- 50 years after its approval problems still remain but
the development of pill was a revolution in itself. The Economist named the
birth control pill one of the Seven Wonders of the World because " When the
history of the 20th century is written, it may be seen as the first time when
men and women were truly partners.

Wonderful things can come in small packets"