The Relationship Between Hormonal Contraceptives and Depression: A Literature Review
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Background
Many women take hormonal contraceptives (HC) as a way to prevent pregnancy or to alleviate common menstrual symptoms and gynecological disorders.

Research Question:
What is the current state of the science related to HC and depression?

Hormonal Contraception use includes significant side effects, such as depression.

Methods: Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
• Search Terms: Hormonal, Contraceptives, Contraception, Birth Control, Depression, Depressive disorder
• Inclusions: Published ≥ 2015, Human Subjects, Women
• Exclusions: Pregnant women, Preexisting mental health disorders, Preexisting gynecologic disorders

Results
• 135 articles were isolated
• 4 articles met inclusion criteria and findings are summarized:
  • No difference in depressive symptoms between HC and non HC users.²
  • Slight difference between HC and non HC users but not statistically significant.³
  • No statistically significant difference in depression between HC and non HC users, but did find statistical significance showing decreased well-being among HC users.⁴
  • 1 study found HC users to have decreased depression but increased anxiety, irritability, and mood swings.⁵

Nursing Implications
These findings suggest a gap in the literature regarding the relationship between HC and depression. More research is needed related to HC and mood changes. Additionally, findings from this review may inform patient decisions that consider mental health.