Blot Clot Risk Higher When Pain Relievers Used With Hormonal Contraception

Using over-the-counter pain relievers known as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as diclofenac, ibuprofen, and naproxen alongside hormonal contraception was tied to a higher chance of developing blood clots, also known as venous thromboembolism, according to data collected from about 2 million women in Denmark between 1996 and 2017.

Women who used high-risk hormonal contraception such as combined estrogen and progestin patches, vaginal rings, or 50-μg estrogen tablets experienced 23 additional venous thromboembolic events per 100 000 women during the first week of NSAID treatment compared with those who didn’t use the pain relievers. The number of additional venous thromboembolisms was lower among women using medium- or low-risk hormonal contraception.

Although the absolute risk of developing a venous thromboembolic event after NSAID use was low, the study raises concerns about using NSAIDs, particularly diclofenac, at the same time as high-risk hormonal contraception, according to a linked editorial in The BMJ.

- Emily Harris

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Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.