

Weight gain, infertility, depression and anxiety: Online misinformation abounds about birth control — prompting women to forgo contraception

Search for “birth control” on TikTok or Instagram and a [cascade of misleading videos](#) vilifying hormonal contraception appear: Young women blaming their weight gain on the pill. Right-wing commentators claiming that some birth control can lead to infertility. Testimonials complaining of depression and anxiety.

Instead, many social media influencers recommend “natural” alternatives, such as timing sex to menstrual cycles — a less effective birth-control method that doctors warn could result in unwanted pregnancies in a country where abortion is now [banned or restricted](#) in nearly half the states.

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Physicians and researchers say little data is available about the scale of this new phenomenon, but anecdotally, more patients are coming in with misconceptions about birth control fueled by influencers and conservative commentators.

“People are putting themselves out there as experts on birth control and speaking to things that the science does not bear out,” said Michael Belmonte, an OB/GYN in D.C. and a family planning expert with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). “I am seeing those direct failures of this misinformation.”

He says women frequently come in for [abortions](#) after believing what they see on social media about the dangers of hormonal birth control and the effectiveness of tracking periods to prevent pregnancy.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here](#)