

# CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

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## **Morally Produced Shingles Vaccine Approved**

In October 2017 Children of God for Life announced that a morally produced shingles vaccine has received FDA approval for licensing in the United States.

Shingrix, made by Glaxo SmithKline (GSK) pharmaceutical company, is produced using a yeast cell line, unlike Merck's Zostavax, which uses aborted fetal cells.

"Until now, people wanting to have protection from shingles have had to either use Merck's aborted fetal version or abstain entirely," stated Debi Vinnedge, executive director at Children of God for Life. "We are absolutely thrilled that GSK has finally given the U.S. a moral option."

Earlier this year, Children of God for Life issued a press release noting that the Shingrix was likely to get the FDA [recommendation as a product of choice](#). In September, the FDA did exactly that, voting [unanimously](#) in its endorsement of Shingrix.

The preference for GSK's shot could seriously hurt Merck's Zostavax sales, which totaled \$685 million last year. Not only is GSK's Shingrix morally produced, but it is also a far superior product as evidenced by lengthy clinical trials.

The studies demonstrated that Shingrix is 97.2 percent effective in people over 50 years old. It also maintained 90 percent efficacy in those 70 years old and above with 95 percent immunity maintained after four years. On the other hand, Merck's Zostavax is only 38 percent effective in people over 70 and only 40 percent duration of immunity after four years.

Shingrix combines a protein from the chickenpox virus called glycoprotein E with the immune system-boosting QS-21 Stimulon made by Agenus.

This unique component is made from the bark of the Quillaja saponaria (soap bark) evergreen tree native to central Chile.

Children of God for Life is hoping that with the advancement of Shingrix, GSK could also produce a moral version of the chickenpox vaccine. Merck's Zostavax is simply a stronger version of its chickenpox vaccine, so it seems possible that GSK could weaken Shingrix for a chickenpox vaccine.

"This is a problem we have dealt with for years and we cannot thank GSK enough for doing it right," Vinnedge noted. "There is absolutely no reason to use the remains of aborted babies to produce vaccines."

In June 2005, the Vatican's Pontifical Academy for Life responded to Children of God for Life's request for help stating unequivocally that:

"Doctors and fathers of families have a duty to take recourse to alternative vaccines, putting pressure on the political authorities and health systems so that other vaccines without moral problems become available. They should take recourse, if necessary, to the use of conscientious objection with regard to the use of vaccines produced by means of cell lines of aborted human fetal origin. Equally, they should oppose by all means the vaccines which do not yet have morally acceptable alternatives, creating pressure so that alternative vaccines are prepared, which are not connected with the abortion of a human fetus, and requesting rigorous legal control of the pharmaceutical industry producers." Likewise, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops noted in their [April 2015 updated statement](#) that "the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities agrees with the National Catholics Bioethics Center, the Catholic Medical Association, and others that manufacturers should be urged to make alternative vaccines more widely available so that Catholics and others will not face this moral dilemma.

“I commend GSK for the development of Shingrix,” said John F. Brehany, director of institutional relations at the National Catholic Bioethics Center. “And I commend the thousands of people who by their prayers and petitions have helped to bring about this day. I hope they will redouble their efforts. Safe and effective, vaccines can and should be provided by the pharmaceutical companies. And everyone who respects human life and dignity should make use of these ethical alternatives.”

<https://cogforlife.org/2017/10/25/moral-shingles-vaccine-fda-approved/>

## **Breast cancer risk skyrockets with longtime hormonal contraception use: new study**

Ingesting hormonal contraception for 10 years increases the risk of breast cancer by 38 percent, according to a new study in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.  
(<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1700717>)

“This is the first study that had shown intrauterine devices with hormones having association with breast cancer in large numbers,” Dr. David Agus, a University of Southern California physician, explained on CBS News.

“With the lower dose of oral contraceptives, we thought there wouldn’t be as much of a risk as the higher dose but it turns out to be the same – about a 20 percent increase in breast cancer overall,” said Agus.

This study shows the risk increases by “nine percent if you’re on it for a year, and up to 38 percent if you’re on it for ten years or more,” he said.

The oncologist who founded breastcancer.org, Dr. Marisa Weiss, told the New York Times the study’s results show “a significant public health concern.”

The study, titled *Contemporary Hormonal Contraception and the Risk of Breast Cancer*, reveals that newer, lower-hormone dose forms of contraception still increase the risk of breast cancer.

The *New York Times* called this risk created by birth control “a small but significant increase.”

“While a link had been established between birth control pills and breast cancer years ago, this study is the first to examine the risks associated with current formulations of birth control pills and devices in a large population,” the *New York Times* wrote.

Pro-lifers have long maintained that hormonal contraception increases the risk of breast cancer. Other [side effects of contraception](#) include weight gain, [blood clots](#), and [depression](#).

This study examined Danish women who use contraception and compared them to those who don’t. The country’s socialized healthcare system makes it easy for researchers to examine data like this.

The study showed that intrauterine devices that release hormones into a woman’s body also increase her risk for breast cancer.

Pro-life activist Africa Obianuju Ekeocha tweeted that she hopes the Canadian government, which is conducting a “contraceptive dump” on Africa, is “ready to pay for cancer treatments for African women too.”

## **Contraception can triple risk of suicide, new study finds**

[Another recent study out of Denmark](#) showed taking hormonal contraception can triple the risk of suicide.

Using hormonal contraceptives increases a woman’s risk of suicide, sometimes even tripling it, a new study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry revealed.

The study, *Association of Hormonal Contraception with Suicide Attempts and Suicides*, was conducted by Danish researchers.

“The patch,” a thin bandage-like piece of plastic that delivers hormones to users, was the method of birth control linked to the highest increase in suicide or suicide attempts. Intrauterine devices (IUDs), the

vaginal ring, and then the birth control pill followed.

“Adolescent women are more sensitive than older women to the influence of hormonal contraceptive on risk of a first suicide attempt,” the study says.

Hormonal contraception is “likely to enhance the influence of any additional factor that might cause mood disturbances,” the authors wrote.

Because “adolescence is a period characterized by endogenous sex hormone changes and changing external cultural and social demands,” teen girls will be even more strongly affected by hormonal contraception.

The researchers’ sample “included only girls from the age of 15 who had no prior use of hormonal contraception.”

The study noted that the initiation of a sexual relationship for these women could be considered a factor that led to the suicidality. However, it eventually concluded “sexual activity does not seem to be an important confounder for the relationship between use of hormonal contraception and suicide attempt or suicide.”

The study suggested the hormone changes brought on by the contraceptives are what led to increased suicide attempts.

“Hormonal contraception may have a direct influence on the neurotransmitter and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal system involved in stress regulation and the neurobiology of suicidal behavior,” the authors wrote. The data they collected “demonstrates a rapid increase in first suicide attempt after initiation of hormonal contraception.”

Hormonal contraception also increases users’ risk of blood clots. Its other side effects include weight gain, decreased libido, and even changes in attraction.

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/new-study-contraception-can-triple-risk-of-suicide>

## From the Office – Year End Report

Well another year is on the books, and while we had some “success” we also continue to face some

“challenges.” The good news is our Information Tables for Life are thriving. A welcome decrease is the number of calls we received asking “How much do you charge for an abortion?” which we refer to life-affirming organizations through the 1-800-395-HELP OptionLine. We also received over a dozen calls in 2017 from distraught family members requesting assistance in stopping the termination of treatment for a family member due to “futile care” opinions of medical personnel. And of course there is our monthly newsletter, which many of you have expressed your appreciation. And let us not miss the assistance we provide students on class projects, as well as our networking with various Students for Life groups, providing materials as requested.

All of the above requires funding, and sadly we operated at a deficit again this year. And while this year’s deficit of slightly over \$4,000 was lower than last year, it was still a deficit, even with our cutbacks in services. In order to continue our current level of activity, we need to increase our donation base. Please consider if there is room in your budget to help us continue this life saving work.

## Quote of the Month

"When the time comes, as it surely will, when we face that awesome moment, the final judgment, I've often thought, as Fulton Sheen wrote, that it is a terrible moment of loneliness. You have no advocates, you are there alone standing before God -- and a terror will rip your soul like nothing you can imagine. But I really think that those in the pro-life movement will not be alone. I think there'll be a chorus of voices that have never been heard in this world but are heard beautifully and clearly in the next world -- and they will plead for everyone who has been in this movement. They will say to God, 'Spare him, because he loved us!'"

- Congressman Henry Hyde

## Calendar of Events

For the latest updates of events see  
[www.calendarforlife.org](http://www.calendarforlife.org)

**MARCH FOR LIFE** – Washington D.C., Jan 19, 2018. For info: <http://marchforlife.org/mfl-2018/>

**ONELIFE LA (Los Angeles) - Sat, Jan 20, 2018 12 noon.** The walk begins at La Placita/Olvera St., ends at LA Historic Park. Visit: [onelifela.org](http://onelifela.org).

**40 Days for Life Walk for Life Gala with Alan Keyes, Fri, Jan 26, 7-9pm** (VIP Reception 6pm), JW Marriott Union Square, 515 Mason St., San Francisco. Visit: <https://40daysforlife.com/GALA/>

**WALK FOR LIFE – WEST COAST  
San Francisco – Sat, Jan 27, 2018**  
Details: <http://www.walkforlifewc.com/>

**STUDENTS FOR LIFE – West Coast  
Conference – Sun, Jan 28, 2018 – St. Mary**

Cathedral, San Francisco. To register:  
<http://sflalive.org/>

**40-Days for Life – “Spring Campaign” – Feb 14  
– Mar 25, 2018.** Visit: <https://40daysforlife.com/>