

Why some experimental forms of 'The Pill for Males' will never rise to the occasion

June 2 2014

It appears that "The Pill" for men will have to wait a while longer. A new research report published in the June 2014 issue of *The FASEB Journal* involving mice, shows that a previously developed male hormonal oral contraceptive method (i.e. via testosterone) is unable to stop the production and / or the release of sperm.

"Our research in mice explains why the efficacy of male hormonal contraception is not as effective as expected and it provides clues on how to improve the method," said Ilpo Huhtaniemi, M.D., Ph.D., M.D.hc, FMed.Sci., a researcher involved in the work from the Institute of Reproductive and Developmental Biology at the Imperial College of London in London, UK.

Scientists demonstrated in experimental mice that the male contraception approach by testosterone has an inherent problem—spermatogenesis does not stop. They found that that administering increasing doses of testosterone to infertile mutant mice did allow sexual function to return at a certain dosing threshold, which was expected. What was not expected, however, is that spermatogenesis also returned at that dose. This suggests that it is impossible to give a single dose of testosterone that allows for [sexual function](#) and the suppression of pituitary gonadotropin secretion, but also does not initiate sperm production.

"Ever since The Pill was developed, we've been aiming for an equivalent for men," said Gerald Weissmann, M.D., Editor-in-Chief of *The FASEB*

Journal. "This report suggests that we may be finally reaching the end of administering [testosterone](#) for this purpose."

More information: Olayiwola O. Oduwole, Natalia Vydra, Nicholas E. M. Wood, Luna Samanta, Laura Owen, Brian Keevil, Mandy Donaldson, Kikkeri Naresh, and Ilpo T. Huhtaniemi. Overlapping dose responses of spermatogenic and extragonadal testosterone actions jeopardize the principle of hormonal male contraception. *FASEB J.* June 2014, 28:2566-2576; [DOI: 10.1096/fj.13-24921](https://doi.org/10.1096/fj.13-24921)

Provided by Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

Citation: Why some experimental forms of 'The Pill for Males' will never rise to the occasion (2014, June 2) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-06-experimental-pill-males-occasion.html>

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