

In this study, a total of 519 patients were interviewed. 82.5% had incomplete abortion. The implication of abortion especially when induced is emphasized. Economic implications that are contributed by the youth are stressed. 83.6% of the patients had not used any contraception. The role of contraception in preventing unwanted pregnancy and therefore induced abortion is stressed. The role of the physician in providing contraception and appropriate contraceptive knowledge is discussed. PIP: A study of 519 consecutive women admitted to Kenyatta National Hospital with the diagnosis of abortion revealed that the majority were young and had a history of nonuse of contraception. Abortion was incomplete in 428 (83%) of cases; 60 (12%) cases involved sepsis. Women 20-24 years of age accounted for 221 (43%) of the abortions; the other two most represented age groups were 25-29 years (28%) and 14-19 years (17%). 460 (89%) of the abortion patients had never used a contraceptive method. The most frequently cited reasons for nonuse were desire for pregnancy (48%), no conscious reason (13%), procrastination in getting to a family planning clinic (8%), no knowledge of family planning (6%), and fear of side effects (6%). Of the 64 cases of failed contraception, 27 were using the pill, 25 had an IUD in place, and 8 were relying on the rhythm method. Among contraceptive users, the major sources of information about contraception were nurses (52%), radio and newspapers (19%), and other women (15%). Only 4% indicated that a physician had discussed family planning with them. Given the resource drain that treatment of incomplete abortion can place on Kenya's health care system and the risk of abortion-induced pelvic infection and subsequent infertility, Kenya's health workers should be encouraged to be more aggressive in promoting family planning use among young women.