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**FDA APPROVES NEW CONTRACEPTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR WOMEN
DOES IT BRING HOPE OR HEARTACHE? A MALE FERTILITY EXPERT
SHEDS SOME LIGHT**

New York, NY January 2, 2003 - The Essure is a new FDA approved procedure intended to provide a permanent and irreversible method of contraception for women. Performed by a gynecologist, a soft, flexible micro-insert is placed into each fallopian tube through the female body's natural pathways. In clinical testing, the total procedure took about 35 minutes, with only 15 minutes required to place the micro-inserts into the fallopian tubes. Most women were able to leave the facility 45 minutes after the procedure. In the Pivotal Trial of Essure, 92% of working women resumed work in 24 hours or less after the day of the procedure.

The Essure procedure does not require incisions or punctures to the body and there is no cutting, clipping, suturing, or burning of tubes. During the three months after the procedure, a woman's body and the micro-insert work together to form a tissue barrier that prevents sperm from reaching the egg. The micro-inserts do not contain or release hormones and are made with the same materials used in other medical products for many years.

While this may sound like the best means of pregnancy prevention to many women since the advent of the pill, Los Angeles urologist and male fertility expert Dr. Philip Werthman espouses a much more cautionary stance:

Unlike a male vasectomy, this is an irreversible procedure! It essentially does irrevocable damage to the fallopian tubes and it is impossible for doctors to cut out the damaged section and sew it back together should a woman wish to become pregnant. There is also no way to gauge long term negative consequences of the insert into the tubes, such as infection. Whereas a vasectomy costs about \$1,000, the Essure is approximately \$3,000.

Dr. Werthman is troubled by the fact that relatively young women (under the age of menopause) will be using a method of contraception that cannot be reversed. Because he treats many vasectomy patients in his practice, he is well aware that 5% of men opt to reverse their vasectomies. He feels strongly that the desire to reverse would be even higher among women. He would urge couples in a long-term relationship who wish to remain childless to consider male vasectomy instead but it can be safely reversed.

With Essure, what may have seemed like an easy and convenient way to prevent a pregnancy, could turn into heartache should a woman change her mind. As more women hold fast track positions in the corporate world, many are so pre-occupied with career goals that they have put the idea of children on the back burner or sworn off of motherhood entirely. Often, incredibly independent and self-sufficient women find that once they have achieved goals in the corporate world, that their focus does change and maternal instincts often kick in. For women who are used to having options and choices, the Essure leaves them with no options to conceive a child other than In Vitro Fertilization.

The following are additional key risks associated with Essure:

- Like all methods of birth control, the Essure procedure should not be considered 100% effective

- Not all women who undergo the Essure procedure will achieve successful placement of both micro-inserts
- Another method of birth control must be used for at least three months after the procedure
- The Essure procedure is newer than other procedures
- Removal of the Essure micro-inserts would require surgery

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