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Requests for abortion drugs increase in Latin America after Zika warnings

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June 23, 2016

A new report indicates that requests for abortion drugs by women in several Latin American countries increased after health officials in those nations issued warnings about the Zika virus.

A new report indicates that requests for abortion drugs by women in several Latin American countries increased after health officials in those nations issued warnings about the Zika virus. The Pan American Health Organization issued an epidemiologic alert about Zika in Latin America last November, and several nations subsequently issued health advisories, including warning about the risk of microcephaly. The study used data from Women on Web (WoW), a nonprofit group that provides access to abortion medications through telemedicine in nations where abortion is not legal or highly restricted. The researchers report that "in Latin American countries that issued warnings to pregnant women about complications associated with Zika virus infection, requests for abortion through WoW increased significantly." They note, however, that the figure may be low, as "many women may have used an unsafe method, accessed misoprostol from local pharmacies or the black market, or visited local underground providers." The findings "provide a window on how concern about Zika virus infection may have affected the lives of pregnant women in Latin America," according to the researchers.

New England Journal of Medicine (06/22/16) Aiken, Abigail R.A.; Scott, James G.; Gomperts, Rebecca; et al.

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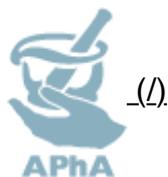
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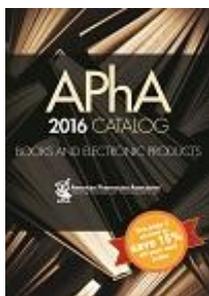


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