

June 15, 2001
Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

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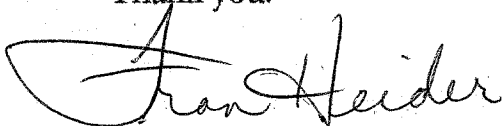
Dear Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305):

I am contacting you regarding the recent petition filed with your administration requesting the availability of the "morning after pill" as an over the counter drug. Having worked as a volunteer for the last 6 years in a women's health facility, I am concerned about some potential problems this could create. I am constantly surprised and disappointed at the lack of education expressed by our callers (primarily female) about their reproductive health. They are very ignorant about their menstrual cycles, fertility, etc., and many of them inquire about the morning after pill having no knowledge of its function. Their inquiring is motivated by a state of panic, not by a realistic possibility of pregnancy. Offering this medication over the counter, relying on the consumer to educate themselves through written information and to follow instructions poses a very real health risk in my opinion.

Also of concern is the emotional risks which may be associated with use of this drug. We receive many, many calls from women requesting help with post-abortion stress symptoms. Again, abortion is a decision a woman makes often under pressure and out of fear, and afterward is often overwhelmed by feelings of regret. Many states now have laws requiring a period of time of education and waiting in an attempt to insure women are prepared for this decision. Making the morning after pill easily accessible and available without any medical counseling could very well lead to an increased number of women suffering from emotional post-abortion symptoms.

With such potential complications, it seems irresponsible to make this drug available to women without a prescription. I hope the FDA will be taking all of the physical and emotional health risks into consideration when discerning this petition.

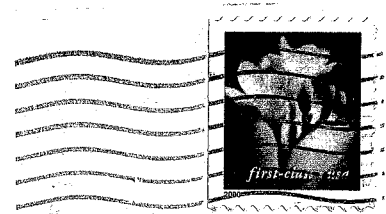
Thank you.



Fran Heider

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5630 FISHERS LANE ROOM 1061
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