

## **Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology**

### **Discussion questions for Lecture 4, 2007**

Hubacher et al. NEJM 2001;345:561-7

Darney P NEJM 2001;345:608-10

Joyce T et al. NEJM 2006; 354:1031-8

#### **Questions:**

Hubacher et al. NEJM 2001;345:561-7

1. Why include infertile controls without tubal occlusion? Is the diagnosis of infertility among infertile controls provided?
2. Hysterosalpingography can only diagnose tubal occlusion, but not tubal adhesions that damage but do not block the tubes. Might this lead to misclassification of IUD associated infertility? If so, how could this be rectified?

Joyce T et al. NEJM 2006; 354:1031-8 (see chart on back)

3. The authors used the rate ratio of the change in abortion rates before and after the parental notification law among minors relative to the rate ratio among 18 year olds. Why did they do this and how do you interpret this statistic? What other measures might they have used?
4. The completeness of reporting of maternal age on abortion certificates increased after the change in law. Why might this occur, and what affect might this have on the estimates?
5. The authors report odds of second trimester abortion (Table 4) and the proportion of second trimester abortions (Fig 1). Why did the odds and the proportion of second rate abortions increase in women 17.5-17.74 years?
6. Birth rates among minors decreased in all ethnic groups except for Hispanics. If women were denied an abortion after the law, why didn't birthrates increase in all ethnic groups?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS (if time allows)

Darney P NEJM 2001;345:608-10

7. In the editorial by Darney there is reference to media publicity and litigation regarding IUD risks in the US. How might this affect retrospective case-control studies ?
8. Darney concludes that the copper IUDs "are not a threat to the health or future fertility of the women who use them, including those without children". Do you agree with this statement? Give your reasons.

### Change in number of abortions and live births before and after parental notification. Texas

