



hands off our ovaries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Founding members of Hands Off Our Ovaries denounces the proposed policy position of the HFEA to increase the availability of human eggs for research purposes.

Hands off Our Ovaries (HOOO), an international movement of ‘pro choice’ and ‘pro life’ women applauds the decision by the HFEA to take the time to examine more carefully the issue of human egg procurement for research. HOOO is concerned with the growing exploitation of women for biotechnological research and the fact that current egg extraction practices pose serious short-term health risks for women. These include Ovarian Hyper Stimulation Syndrome, which can affect up to 10% of women and prove fatal in some rare cases. Furthermore, knowledge of long term risks is currently inadequate. There is a long history of significant damage to women’s health resulting from careless and overzealous use of hormones in DES (diethylstilbestrol given to pregnant women) to HRT (hormone replacement therapy for menopausal women). It took many decades before the damage from these widely used hormones was documented implicating the inadequacies of short-term studies. The future reproductive health of thousands of women may be jeopardized if the donation of human ova is encouraged without more careful research. Studies to date have not ruled out a possible link between stimulation drugs and an increased risk of ovarian cancer. Finally, a recent study in mice suggests that subsequent offspring of those undergoing ovarian hyperstimulation may be at risk for significant abnormalities as well.

At the feminist colloquium on reprototechnology in the European Parliament, Hands Off Our Ovaries founding member, Jennifer Lahl said, “We seek a moratorium on egg extraction for research purposes until such time as global discourse and scientific research yields information sufficient to establish adequate informed consent for the female egg donor.”

Professor Diane Beeson of Hands Off Our Ovaries stated, “As a society we are at a turning point in our relationship to science. We are being asked to make women the servants of biotechnology rather than insisting on a biotechnology that promotes the well-being of all people.”

More information can be found at www.handsoffourovary.com or email everywoman@handsoffourovary.com

Contact details for press:

Diane Beeson (011 510 917 0474)

Jennifer Lahl (011 510 290 3891)

Josephine Quintavalle (0044 207 581 2623)

M.L.Tina Stevens (011 415 338 1604)