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Zika Update: Health Warnings About Effects of Zika Virus on Newborns Drive Increasing Demand of Abortion in Latin America

By John Raphael

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A new study revealed an increased of abortion request in Latin American countries following the issuance of health warnings urging women to avoid getting pregnant due to the effects of Zika virus to newborns. (Photo : Spencer Platt/NewsMakers)

A new study revealed that health warnings about the complication of Zika virus to pregnant women resulted to an increased demand for abortion in Latin American countries.

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The study, published in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#), stated that many countries in the Latin America rule abortion as either illegal or highly restrictive. These

methods, access abortion drugs without medical supervision or visit underground providers.

For the study, researchers looked into data on request for abortions through Women on Web between 1 January 2010 and 2 March 2016 in 19 Latin-American countries.

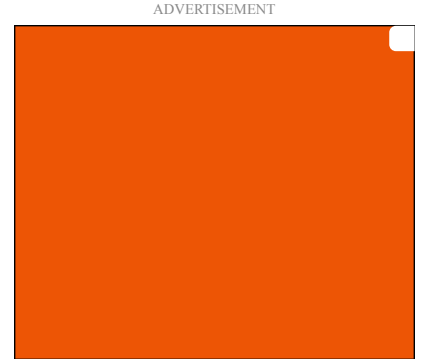
Women on Web is a non-profit organization that provides medical abortion outside the formal healthcare setting

through online telemedicine, in countries where safe abortion is not universally available.

The researchers then discovered an increase in the request for abortion through the website following the issuance of health warnings by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on November 17, 2015 urging women to avoid getting pregnant.

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Most countries that have issued health warnings about Zika virus and had legal restrictions on abortion



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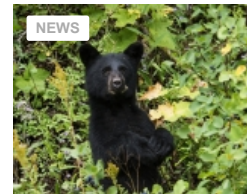
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experienced significant increase of request for abortion. Abortion requests in countries including Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela have doubled, while other countries with restriction on abortion rose by over a third. On the other hand, there is no significant increase in request for abortion in countries that did not issue any health warnings.

"It isn't enough for health officials just to warn women about the risks associated Zika - they must also make efforts to ensure that women are offered safe, legal, and accessible reproductive choices," commented Dr Catherine Aiken from the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology at the University of Cambridge in a [statement](#).

Last April, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed that Zika virus causes a rare birth defect called microcephaly.

Information about safe abortion with pills



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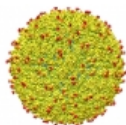
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