Learning Objectives – Contraceptive Agents

1. Appreciate the significant numbers of dispensed prescriptions of hormonal contraceptives, their demographics of use, and which agents are currently among those most commonly prescribed.
2. Be aware of the fact that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists opine that long-acting reversible contraceptives (implants and IUDs) are safe and appropriate for most women and adolescents.
4. Understand the common formulations of combination oral contraceptives, the pharmacokinetics (ADMET) of such agents, and the underlying mechanisms of contraceptive action.
5. Identify the principal estrogen component in COCs and the principal representative progestin components of different progestin generations found commonly in hormonal contraceptives.
6. Recognize the warnings, precautions, and adverse effects associated with combination oral contraceptives (COCs), particularly thromboembolic disorders and other vascular problems.
7. Know the high-risk factors for venous thromboembolism in users of COCs.
8. Understand that hormonal contraceptives may affect a woman’s risk for various cancers and other disorders.
9. Recognize that progestin-only contraceptives are effective. Know the demographics of women who may be prescribed progestin-only contraceptives. Know the mechanisms of action and longevities of the several forms of progestin-only contraceptives: Depo-Provera, progestin-only pills, and Nexplanon implant.
10. Know that progestin-releasing subdermal implants are highly effective means of contraception and that they are known by the acronym, LARC.
11. Recognize that emergency contraception is common and know the FDA-approved and available formulations effective for emergency contraception, including their purported mechanisms of action, their OTC and prescription availability, and how time of administration affects efficacy.
12. Know the types of commonly prescribed IUDs, their purported mechanisms of action, their status as LARCs, and the representative insertion lifetimes and progestin/copper status for Skyla, Mirena, and Paragard.
13. Know the reversibility of action of the several contraceptive methods reviewed.