



Registered charity no. 1128355 (England and Wales) and SCO41329 (Scotland)

**Press release, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## **New study provides possible biological evidence of link between abortion and breast cancer**

The national pro-life charity LIFE is calling for more scientific investigation of the link between abortion and breast cancer following the publication this week of a new study providing possible biological evidence of a link.

American biochemical researchers at Georgia Regents University revealed yesterday that they have found that the gene DNMT1 which is essential to maintaining breast, or mammary, stem cells, that enable normal rapid growth of the breasts during pregnancy, also produces stem cells that may enable breast cancer. They explained that mammary stem cells help maintain the breasts during puberty as well as pregnancy, both periods of dynamic breast cell growth. During pregnancy, breasts may generate 300 times more cells as they prepare for milk production. This mass production may also include tumor cells, a mutation that seems to increase with age. The researchers pointed out that when the fetus is lost before term, immature cells that were destined to become breast cells, can more easily become cancer. The researchers pointed out that while the exact reasons remain unclear, there is an increased risk of breast cancer if the first pregnancy occurs after age 30 as well as in women who lose their baby during pregnancy or have an abortion.

LIFE Spokeswoman Anne Scanlan said "This is the type of research we have been calling for. There are over 50 studies showing a link between abortion and breast cancer. Now this study shows possible biological causation and we would therefore urge the medical research community in the UK to engage in greater scientific investigation.

For too long this issue has not been taken seriously despite the large number of studies pointing to a link. We have to act in the best interest of women and if there are long term health risks associated with induced abortion, it is right, as in any medical procedure, that women are fully informed of the associated risks."

In 2013, a major Chinese study covering 14 provinces of China showed a positive link between abortion and breast cancer. The study published in the prestigious medical journal *Cancer Causes Control*, concluded that just one abortion was associated with 44% increase from the baseline risk of breast cancer. For women who have had two abortions there was a 76% increase from the baseline risk, and for women who have had three or more abortions the risk almost doubles.

**END**

**Note to editor : Press Release from Georgia Regent University is at:**

[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2015-05/mcog-gft051115.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-05/mcog-gft051115.php)

**For further media comment please call the media hotline on 07867 744502**

LIFE, a registered charity No. 1128355 (England and Wales) and SCO41329 (Scotland) is the UK's leading provider of crisis pregnancy, post-abortion counselling and supported accommodation for pregnant women and mothers of young children.

LIFE Caring offers counselling, information and support on abortion and pregnancy related issues via our free phone national helpline (0800 915 4600) or our nationwide network of pregnancy care centres.

LIFE Housing runs a supported housing programme for pregnant women and mothers of small children. LIFE Education employs regional officers throughout the UK, who speak to students about life issues. LIFE spokespersons are available to comment on issues relating to abortion, embryo research, reproductive technologies, sexual health and sex education. Please see [www.lifecharity.org.uk](http://www.lifecharity.org.uk) for more information.