

## Study links abortion to higher breast cancer risk

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Women under age 45 who have had abortions could have a 50 percent higher risk of developing breast cancer than other women in that age group, according to a new study.

Although researchers stress that the latest findings are not definitive, representatives from pro-life organizations say the new information cannot be ignored.

"Women should be made aware of the possibility of an abortion-breast cancer link as one of the many risk factors associated with the procedure," said Wanda Franz, president of the National Right to Life Committee.

The study, to be published in the Nov. 2 issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, contains the results of seven years of research by the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle.

The researchers, who interviewed more than 1,800 women in the Seattle area, found that induced abortion was associated with a 50 percent increased risk of breast cancer. They also found that women under 18 years of age who had abortions increased their risk of breast cancer by 150 percent, while women over 30 increased their risk by 110 percent.

For the younger women, the risk was higher if the abortion was performed



AP/Wide World

## Building a new force

Members of the Haitian Interim Public Security Force Oct. 27 wave at villagers as they drive through the countryside outside of Cap Haitien in northern Haiti. The security force and members of the international Police Monitors had gone to a nearby village to investigate a recent murder in the area. The security force is in training before it will be formed into a new police force.

after eight weeks of gestation or if the woman had a family history of breast cancer.

No increased breast cancer risk was associated with spontaneous abortion or miscarriage, the study said.

One of the study's authors, Noel Weiss, said the suspected link between abortion and breast cancer was the proliferation of breast tissue early in pregnancy.

"The concern is that induced abor-

tion, especially toward the end of the first trimester of pregnancy, might leave a woman with (breast) cells that are ... developed to a certain degree but not fully, and those cells might be more prone to develop cancer later in life," Weiss told the Reuters news agency in a telephone interview.

The researchers conclude that the study only "supports the hypothesis" that abortion affects the risk of breast cancer and must be confirmed by more research.

An accompanying editorial in the journal also labels the research results as "far from conclusive," stating that a 50 percent difference in risk is "small in epidemiological terms."

"I am certain that this study, like others before it will simply be denied, misrepresented or ignored," said Judie Brown, president of American Life League.



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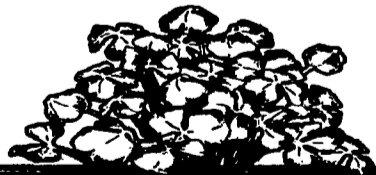
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