THE ROLE OF DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS IN POST-ABORTION CONTRACEPTIVE DECISION-MAKING

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While previous research has found worse psychological health before an abortion predicts psychological health and coping after an abortion, none has focused on the extent to which psychological health before an abortion influences other outcomes important to women’s autonomy and health. Here, we examine the relationship between pre-abortion psychological health and contraceptive decision-making processes among women seeing abortions at three community reproductive health clinics. We focus on effectiveness level women intend to use post-abortion because this is directly related to whether women will have a future unintended pregnancy. We assessed contraceptive intention both before and after women’s contraceptive counseling. Those experiencing more psychological distress before their abortion were more likely to intend to use low versus moderately and high effective methods both before and after contraceptive counseling. These results suggest that women experiencing more psychological distress before their abortion may be at higher risk of subsequent unwanted pregnancy.