



WHAT DO PEOPLE SEARCH ON GOOGLE ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL IN MISSISSIPPI?

Mississippi health advocates and researchers from the Bixby and the Wallace Centers at the University of California, Berkeley conducted a study that examined Google search traffic* on abortion and family planning in 2018 to understand Mississippians' unique needs.

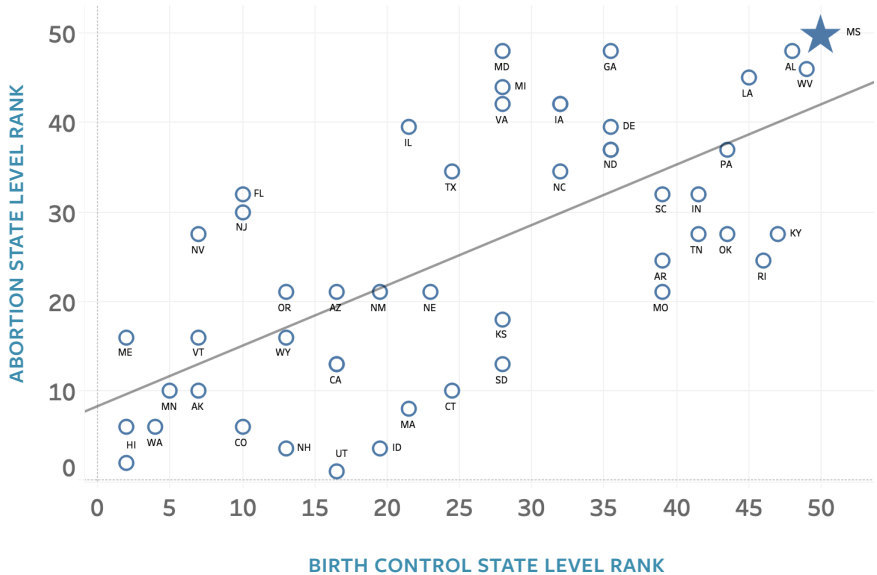
Mississippi is the state with the highest volume of searches for "birth control" relative to all other states in the U.S.

- 1 MISSISSIPPI
- 2 WEST VIRGINIA
- 3 ALABAMA
- 4 KENTUCKY
- 5 RHODE ISLAND
- 6 LOUISIANA

Higher volume of searches for birth control was closely linked to abortion restrictions and protections, and to a higher percentage of people that think abortion should be illegal.

Higher volume of searches for birth control also linked to higher percentage of unintended pregnancies.

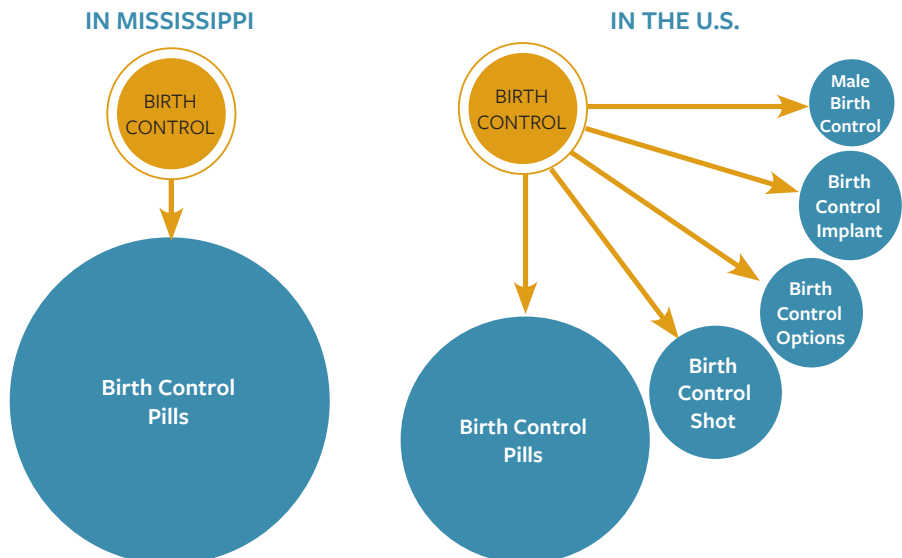
Searches for birth control were strongly linked with searches for abortion.



TOP SEARCH QUERIES ASSOCIATED WITH BIRTH CONTROL

When people in Mississippi search for "birth control," research shows they are mainly searching for information related to birth control pills.

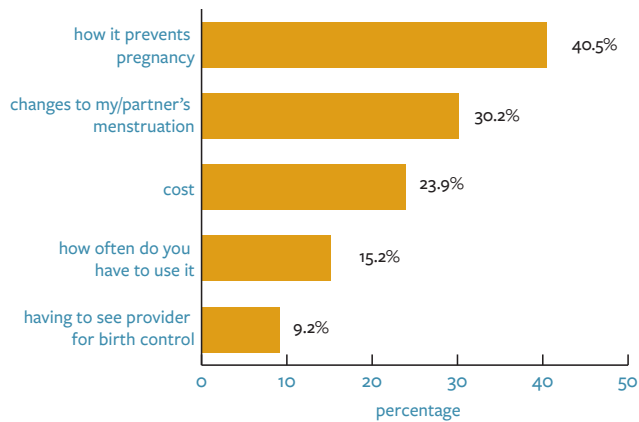
This differs from search data in the broader U.S. where searches for "birth control" correlate with a larger spectrum of contraceptive methods.



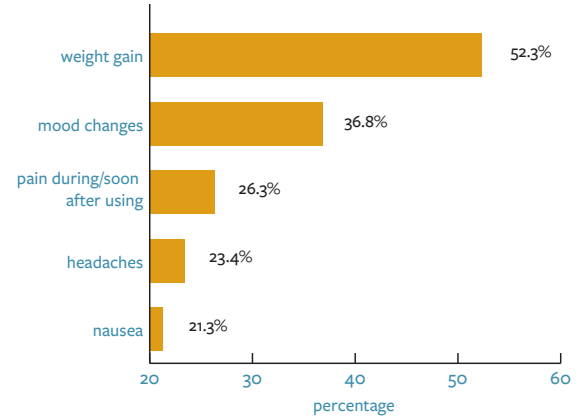
* Google is the top search engine used across the internet and accounts for 88 % of internet search traffic across the U.S. (statcounter.com)

Among women ages 18 - 44 in LA who searched for birth control information on Google between 2017 and 2018, the most searched methods were: pills (51.2%), IUD (22.3%), implants (19.0%), and shot (14.2%). Additional findings are below.

TOP FIVE CONCERNS ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL



TOP FIVE CONCERNS ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL SIDE EFFECTS



MOST COMMONLY VISITED WEBSITES FOR INFORMATION ON BIRTH CONTROL

Using a Website Quality Assessment Tool, the Planned Parenthood website scored highest for quality based on the user experience of the website, its clinical information, facts, and completion and accuracy of information.

Among the top sites, only Planned Parenthood provides information about contraceptive methods as well as services. Other sites only provided information about contraceptives.

- 1 womenshealth.gov & womenshealth.com
- 2 plannedparenthood.org
- 3 wikipedia.org
- 4 birthcontrol.com
- 5 medlineplus.gov

IMPLICATIONS

- The high volume of birth control searches in MS might indicate a high level of unmet need for information about contraceptives and potentially services.
- High interest on how well birth control prevents pregnancy might reflect a concern about unintended pregnancy. Unintended pregnancies account for 56% of pregnancies (Center for Mississippi Health Policy, 2018).
- Changes in contraceptive access (e.g. cut backs in contraceptive funding, insurance coverage for services, restrictions in contraceptive choices, etc.) can lead to increases in volume of internet searches for birth control.
- To better support clients, provider training could include knowledge about most searched contraceptive methods, most important contraceptive attribute, and side effect women are concerned with.
- The top websites accessed for birth control information by 18-44 year old women in MS generally present limited information on contraceptive methods and no information on services. Planned Parenthood is the exception and could be promoted as a resource for information and education on contraceptives.
- Health and social service providers interact routinely with people of reproductive age and should be trained and supported to inform and refer people to comprehensive reproductive health services.

Data for this study were drawn from three Customized Google API's (Google Trends, Google Health Trends and Custom Search API) and from a Google Consumer Survey (GCS) of 660 English-speaking women, ages 18 to 44 in Mississippi that accessed the Google engine in the past year and searched for birth control information. To learn more and read the full report, visit wallacecenter.berkeley.edu. This study was funded by The David and Lucille Packard Foundation.