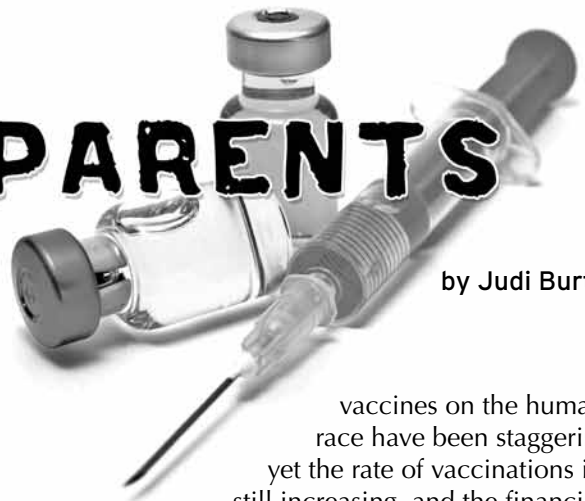


WHY SOME PARENTS

Won't Vaccinate Their Kids



by Judi Burton

As the school year approaches, many children are getting the required vaccines needed to attend classes with other children. Some parents object to vaccinating for various reasons, and sign exemption forms in order to still have their children in class. This causes a rift between parents who do and parents who don't vaccinate. There are long-accepted reasons for vaccinating, and a growing list shared by parents for not doing so. *Natural Awakenings* doesn't take a position on the issue. If your child is vaccinated and attends school with a child who isn't, it is believed that your child is at no increased risk.

History

A vaccine is essentially a cocktail of dead or milder organisms from a potentially deadly virus. It was first used on a young boy as an experiment in 1770. Edward Jenner, the discoverer of the first vaccine, heard a young milkmaid boasting she would never suffer from smallpox because she had already contracted cowpox, which was a milder form of smallpox. Jenner injected puss from the cowpox virus into the boy's arm. Six weeks later, the boy was given a dose of smallpox. He did not contract the deadlier disease, leading Jenner to surmise that the injection of cowpox had worked. Today, a child is given 27 vaccines. Smallpox is no longer included, as it was eradicated in 1972. Children are given 21 vaccines before the age of 6. Six more are administered before they reach 18. DtaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) is given five times in a child's life.

Infant Mortality Rate in the United States

Since immunizations have become routine, many deadly viruses have been controlled or eradicated. The benefits of

vaccines on the human race have been staggering, yet the rate of vaccinations is still increasing, and the financial windfall to the pharmaceutical industry generates suspicion. If diseases are rarer, why increase the vaccination rate?

According to a recent study in the *Journal of Human and Experimental Toxicology*, the current infant mortality rate in the United States is ranked at 34., 33 other nations other nations ranking better than the United States. Currently, the immunization schedule of an American child is far more rigorous than any other nation in the world. In 1975, Japan eliminated vaccines for children under the age of 2. Japan's infant mortality rate subsequently dropped to the lowest level in the world. But this could be due to other reasons besides vaccinations. Japan also has a much lower obesity rate, which would lead one to infer that the Japanese have better nutrition as well. It would not be hard to correlate the eating habits of pregnant mothers to the mortality rate of infants. In fact, women who are classified obese are twice as likely to lose their baby in the first year as opposed to non-obese women. In comparison, the US obesity rate has skyrocketed to 30 percent of the adult population, while the Japanese rate is at 3 percent.

Autism

As the vaccination schedule increased in America, parents began to see a corresponding increase in autism and deadly allergies shortly after their children received their vaccinations. Some children experience seizures after vaccinations due to fever, which is normal in the vaccination process.



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The median age is 2 years old when children are diagnosed with autism, and by that time, most children have received 16 shots within five visits.

Animal Byproducts

Many people refuse to give their children vaccines because they are vegan or vegetarian. Some vaccines have animal products in them including chick embryos, monkey kidney cells, fetal bovine serum, and embryonic guinea pig cell cultures. Because of their strict ethical beliefs on killing animals for human consumption, these parents decide to forego the vaccine. Not all vaccines have these ingredients.

Chemicals

Some parents are concerned about chemical exposure. Some ingredients in vaccines include mercury, formaldehyde and aluminum, all toxic at certain levels. Aluminum is common and can be found in everything from breast milk to regular tap water. Antibiotics, preservatives and monosodium glutamate are added to other vaccines.

Religion

Religious beliefs are an additional reason given for electing to not vaccinate. Some vaccines have human fetus lung tissue, which is abhorrent to many who are religiously devout or strict. The use of human fetal issue is a tremendous concern for many, especially where business and profit is tied to the use of human fetal tissue.

Research

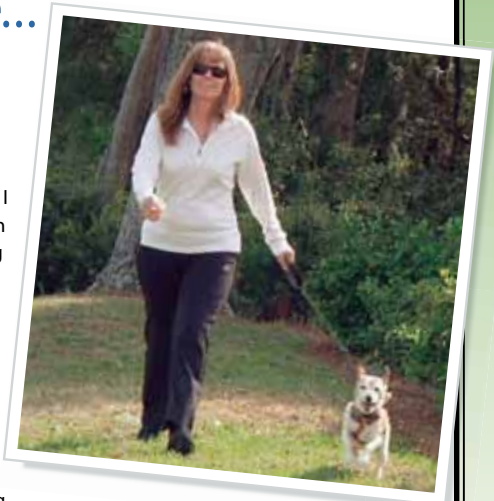
Many parents are just not convinced that there has been enough research on the adverse effects of all these vaccines put together in a very small body. There have been no long-term studies on the cumulative effects on the child's developing immune system of combining all these vaccines together.

Risks and Evidence

It is highly recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to vaccinate your children regardless of your beliefs. The United States is experiencing an increase in measles

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cases in 2011. A scientific review by the Institute of Medicine concluded, “The evidence favors rejection of a causal relationship between thimerosal (a mercury based preservative) containing vaccines and autism.” Exposure to ethyl-mercury from thimerosal-containing immunizations during pregnancy (prenatally), or as a young child, was not associated with any of the ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) outcomes. The lack of studies and peer reviews seems to be a major complaint on both sides of the table. Several ideas

for further research have been offered, such as looking at the autism rate in third world countries with less vaccines and comparing it with the autism rate in more developed countries with a higher rate and number of vaccinations and vaccines. Another idea is to look at the growing number of unvaccinated children to see if they too have an autism rate of 1 in 110.

For more info about vaccines, visit CDC.gov. For more info on autism, visit Autism-society.org.