

[Page 19] PERTUSSIS: Pertussis continues to increase, with over 800 cases and 280 cases reported in 2003 in Washington State and King County, respectively. In 2003, 53% (20/38) of the infant cases reported in King County required hospitalization. Infants with pertussis might not be able to cough--instead, they may have problems feeding and may stop breathing at times. Until babies receive the first dose of DTaP vaccine at two months of age, they have no protection against pertussis, and they become better protected against *severe* pertussis with each dose of DTaP vaccine they receive. To help protect infants from pertussis and other infections, keep them away from persons with colds and respiratory illnesses.

[Pages 20-21] QUESTION: Is there any evidence to indicate an association between MMR vaccine and autism?

[Summary online at www.immunize.org/mmrautism/index.htm]

2004: The IOM Immunization Safety Review Committee concluded that: **1) there is no association between MMR vaccine and autism**, and 2) there is no evidence for the hypothesis regarding a link between MMR and autism.

2004: Ten of the thirteen authors of the Wakefield study (1998) retracted the paper's interpretation, stating now that there was not enough data to establish a link between MMR vaccine and autism (Murch et al.).

2004: A study conducted by the CDC found that there was no difference in the age that children with autism and children without received their first dose of MMR vaccine (DeStefano et al.).

2002: A study of nearly 500,000 children in Denmark found that: 1) children vaccinated with MMR vaccine were not more likely to have autism than children who were unvaccinated, and 2) there was no association between the age at time of vaccination, the amount of time that had passed since vaccination, or the date of vaccination and the development of autism. **This study provides strong evidence against the hypothesis that MMR vaccination causes autism** (Madsen et al.).

[Page 24] QUESTION: I heard that the recommendations for flu vaccine have changed and that I should have my 7-month old baby vaccinated. Is this true?

ANSWER: Yes. In the past, the ACIP *encouraged* infants 6-23 months of age to get flu vaccine because infants in this age group with influenza are more likely to have serious illness and complications, including hospitalization. Starting in 2004, infants 6-23 months of age are *recommended* to get flu vaccine. Additionally, household contacts and caretakers of infants under two years of age are recommended to get flu vaccine each year, to protect infants and children they have close contact with. Children under 9 years of age getting flu vaccine for the first time should get 2 doses, 4 weeks apart. The best time to get flu vaccine is in October or November.

[Page 24] QUESTION: I heard that there is a new flu vaccine that is given in the nose. Can my 7-month old get this new type of flu vaccine?

ANSWER: There is a new type of flu vaccine that can be given in the nose (intranasal). FluMist™ is a live-attenuated (weakened) vaccine that was licensed in 2003 and is sprayed into both nostrils. Inactivated influenza vaccine ("flu shot") is the flu vaccine that has been used for many years. However, your 7-month old cannot get FluMist™ because it is only approved for use in healthy children and adults who are 5 to 49 years of age. Also, FluMist™ should not be given to pregnant women; people with some chronic health conditions like heart and lung disease; people with weakened immune systems, due to diseases like HIV/AIDS or medications like anti-cancer drugs; or children and adolescents on long-term aspirin treatment.

[Page 31] QUESTION: Has the thimerosal in vaccines been shown to be harmful to children? Note: Thimerosal has been removed from all routinely recommended childhood vaccines, except some influenza (flu) vaccine, and tetanus-diphtheria (Td) vaccine used in individuals seven years and older (continued on other side).

[Page 31] QUESTION: Has the thimerosal in vaccines been shown to be harmful to children (continued from other side)?

[Summary online at www.immunize.org/safety/thimerosal.htm]

2004: The IOM Immunization Safety Review Committee concluded that: 1) there is no association between autism and vaccines that contain thimerosal as a preservative, and 2) there is no evidence for the hypothesis regarding a link between autism and vaccines that contain thimerosal.

2003: Part of the system to monitor for vaccine safety is the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD) project, which includes medical data on a large number of people at large health maintenance organizations (HMO). As of November 2003, CDC has not found any evidence from the VSD project that neurodevelopmental disabilities such as autism are caused by vaccines containing thimerosal. This finding is consistent with scientific evidence to date.

Resources for Parents

WEB SITES

1. **Immunization Action Coalition/Hepatitis B Coalition:**
www.immunize.org
 - Lots of information on immunizations, including free stuff you can download on adult and childhood immunizations
 - Vaccine Information Statements available in 31 languages at www.immunize.org/vis/index.htm
 - Link to video clips of an infant with pertussis www.vaccineinformation.org/video/index.asp
2. **National Network for Immunization Information**
 - Vaccine safety and general vaccine information www.immunizationinfo.org
 - "Frequently Asked Questions for Parents" www.immunizationinfo.org/parents/faq.htm

Resources for Parents

3. **Children's Vaccine Program :** www.childrensvaccine.org
 - Segments of a documentary available to view online: "Fragile Lives-Immunization at Risk"
4. **CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)**
 - CDC Home Page: www.cdc.gov
 - National Immunization Program: www.cdc.gov/nip
5. **Washington Department of Health Immunization Program**
www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/immunize

E-MAIL, FAX and PHONE NUMBERS

1. **Public Health—Seattle & King County**
 - Immunization Program: (206) 296-4774
 - Vaccine Distribution Program: (206) 296-4782
 - Communicable Disease Hotline: (206) 296-4949
2. **CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)**
 - National Immunization Program e-mail address: nipinfo@cdc.gov
 - National Immunization Information Hotline, staffed 8am-11pm (EST)
 - English: 1-800-232-2522
 - Spanish: 1-800-232-0233
 - CDC Fax Information: 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299)
3. **Washington State Immunization Program:**
 - Main number: (360) 236-3595

BOOKS/PAMPHLETS

1. Offit, Paul A. MD and Louis M Bell, MD. Vaccines: What You Should Know, 3rd edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, March 2003.
2. Humiston, Sharon, MD and Cynthia Good. Vaccinating Your Child - Questions and Answers for the Concerned Parent. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, Ltd., 2000.