



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES EPIDEMIOLOGICAL BOARD
5109 LEESBURG PIKE
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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AFEB (15-1a) 95-3

24 July 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (HEALTH AFFAIRS)
THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Recommendation Concerning Varicella Vaccine

1. Varicella represents a limited but potentially disruptive infection in recruit populations. In the face of background immunity of >90%, universal immunization of recruits is not recommended. To determine the proper role for the newly licensed varicella vaccine in military settings, the Board recommends the following:

AN UNCONTROLLED PILOT PROJECT SHOULD BE CONDUCTED TO ASSESS THE PREVENTIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF SEROLOGIC SCREENING OF ALL RECRUITS FOR VARICELLA ANTIBODY FOLLOWED BY IMMUNIZATION OF NONIMMUNES WITH THE STANDARD TWO-DOSE REGIMEN. THE RELIABILITY OF A HISTORY OF CHICKENPOX SHOULD BE DETERMINED IN THIS STUDY WITH THE GOAL OF POSSIBLY LESSENING THE NEED FOR SEROLOGIC TESTING IN THE FUTURE.

2. Results of this study will allow development of a consistent service-wide policy for the use of varicella vaccine.

LEWIS H. KULLER, M.D., DrPH
President, AFEB

FRANCIS L. O'DONNELL
Colonel, USA, MC
Preventive Medicine Staff Officer
Acting, AFEB Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: Recommendations Concerning Varicella Vaccine

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