

Vaccination

Few issues in health care arouse the same emotions as that of vaccination. On the one hand you have most of the medical profession, with the immense financial backing and motivation of the pharmaceutical companies, insisting it is vital and implying you are a bad parent if you don't. On the other hand are the supporters of natural health care, who can only give you information regarding the risks and benefits involved in vaccination, leaving you to make the decision yourself. The issue is often clouded further in certain parts of the world by dictatorial government legislation.

One thing to keep in mind is that each of your health care providers will give you an opinion based upon what he or she believes to be in your best interests.

Benefits

Vaccination is based upon the fact that when you are infected by an organism, your immune system becomes more sensitive to that organism and more capable of raising your immune response upon further exposure to it. The process of vaccination typically involves injecting pieces of, or weakened, organisms into your body. It is intended that this process will make your immune system more sensitive to that particular organism.

Supporters of vaccination claim great benefits in decreasing disease rates in vaccinated populations. People who disagree with vaccination claim that the reduction in disease rates is due to more healthy living practises such as improved nutrition, better sanitation and hygiene, improved water supply and housing, etc. (public health measures) and increased 'herd immunity' – the increasing resistance from generations of exposure to diseases. They claim the reduced disease rates after the introduction of vaccines are part of a normal decreasing incidence rather than due to vaccination. They also claim vaccinations have failed to be proven beneficial.

Risks

Both parties agree there are risks associated with vaccines. Vaccines have been associated with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome – 'cot death' (it has been shown that when Japan changed the age of vaccination to 2 years, they virtually eliminated S.I.D.S.), autism, asthma, allergies, lowered resistance to disease, leukemia, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, learning disorders, and many other health complaints. Some studies have shown increased incidence of those diseases to which children have been vaccinated against.

Detractors claim that injecting organisms directly into a child bypasses the first line of immune cells in the tissues which surround the body. These cells are responsible for sensitising the immune system, if they do not come into contact with the organism involved in a natural fashion they do not enhance immunity. They also claim that the majority of diseases vaccinated against do not pose a significant health risk considering treatment options available today.

Supporters of vaccination commonly claim that non-vaccinated children are responsible for infecting vaccinated children, and have used this argument to institute compulsory vaccination in certain parts of the world. This argument doesn't support the assertion that vaccination improves the health of people; if it was effective only non-vaccinated children would contract the diseases.

Supporters of vaccination claim that the benefits of this procedure far outweigh the risks involved. Those that disagree state that the benefits have not been proven and that the risks are substantial and considerably greater than the disease being vaccinated against. They advise that you promote your health through other measures and avoid vaccination.

Whatever your choice, you must be comfortable with it. There are risks both

This information has been condensed from the following sources, please read them for further information:

'DPT a shot in the dark', Coulter and Fisher

'How to raise a healthy child in spite of your doctor', Mendelsohn

'Vaccination', Viera Scheibner – ask your Chiropractic Doctor for source

'The Role of Medicine', McKeown