

“Internet (Mis)information about Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and the Hepatitis B Vaccine”

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Influence of the Internet

- The growth of the Internet means that incorrect information is spread much more easily and rapidly than before.
- One billion people are online in the world.
- Most people use the Internet to seek out health information.
- Anyone with a few dollars can put together a website and become the virtual equivalent of CDC in many readers' minds.

Using the Internet for health information

- **United States**

- 80% of American adults online use the Internet to access health care information (Pew Research Center, 5/15/05)
- Most average 3 searches/month (Harris Poll)
- 53% look using a search engine or portal
- Most are young and high-income
- 48% sought info on experimental health care

“Googling” for “vaccine”

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window titled "Google Search: vaccine - Netscape". The address bar contains the URL "http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&ie=UTF-8&q=vaccine&bt". The search bar contains the word "vaccine". The search results are displayed on the "Web" tab, showing "Results 1 - 10 of about 3,530,000 for vaccine [definition]. (0.15 seconds)".

Web Results 1 - 10 of about 3,530,000 for **vaccine** [definition]. (0.15 seconds)

News results for vaccine - View all the latest headlines

- Another Aids **Vaccine** On Trial - AllAfrica.com - 1 hour ago
- Panel: No **vaccine**-autism link - Salt Lake Tribune - 5 hours ago

A-1 database on vaccines and news about vaccines
The **Vaccine** Page is a serious attempt to collect all useful information about vaccines, organize it meaningfully, present it appropriately for each of several ...
vaccines.org/ - 23k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0264410X
[Similar pages](#)

National Vaccine Information Center
... The National **Vaccine** Information Center (NVIC) is a national, non-profit educational organization founded in 1982. ... Do I know how to report a **vaccine** reaction? ...
www.909shot.com/ - 60k - May 17, 2004 - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

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www.TodaysMoneyNews.com
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The taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several icons, and open applications: "Document: Done (0.491 secs)", "Inbox - Microsoft Outl...", "Google Search: vac...", and "Microsoft PowerPoint ...". The system clock shows "11:49 AM".

Growth of websites critical of vaccination

- **Professional organizations**
 - Chiropractic (ACA, ICPA, ICA, WCA)
 - Alternative medicine practitioners
 - Special-interest groups (AAPS)
- **Non-profit organizations**
 - National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC)
- **Personal websites**

“The irony of the information age is that it has given new respectability to uninformed opinion.”

John Lawton,
American Broadcasters' Association

The fact that HBV is transmitted in the U.S. primarily through sex contact and drug use while the vaccine is recommended for newborns makes hep B vaccine a prime target for vaccine critics' scorn.

Consider what we know about risk communication.

Risk perception

- Risks perceived to be voluntary are more accepted than risks perceived as being imposed.
- Risks perceived to have clear benefits are more accepted than risks perceived to have little benefit.
- Risks perceived to be natural are more accepted than risks perceived to be manmade.

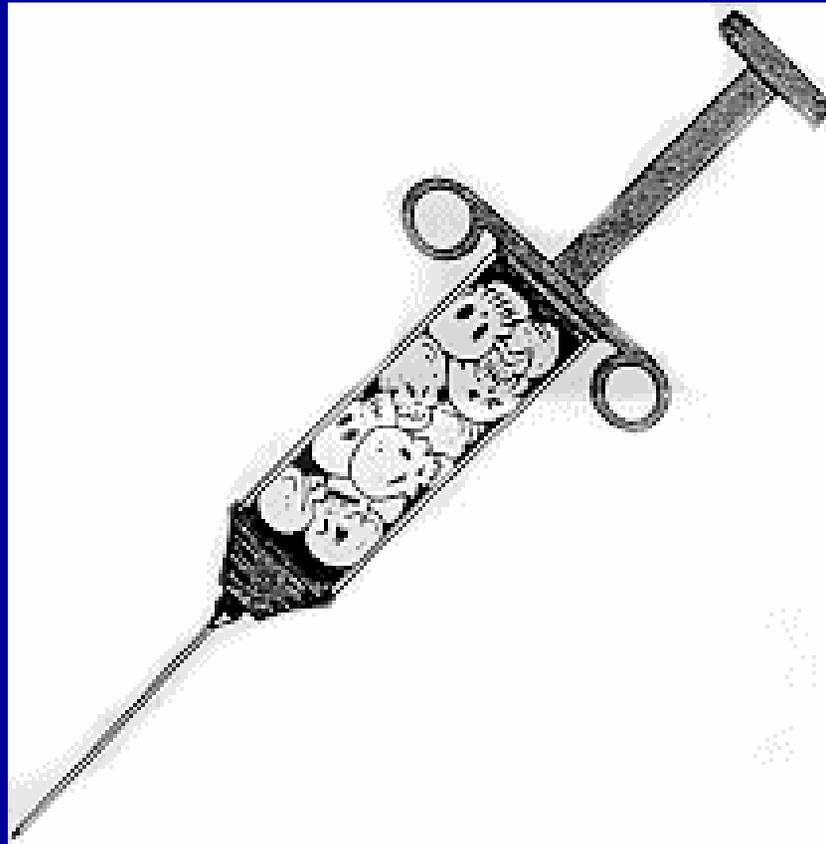
Risk perception cont...

- Risks perceived to be familiar are more accepted than risks perceived to be exotic.
- Risks that are distributed fairly are more accepted than risks perceived to be unfairly distributed.
- Risks that affect adults are more accepted than risks that affect children.

“Even though hepatitis B is an adult disease, is not highly contagious, is not deadly for most who contract it, and is not in epidemic form in the U.S. (except among high risk groups such as IV drug addicts), in 1991 the ACIP recommended that all infants be injected with the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine at birth before being discharged from the hospital newborn nursery.”

National Vaccine Information Center

Types of HBV and hepatitis B vaccine misinformation found on vaccine critics' websites



Arguments against hepatitis B vaccination of infants

- Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe.
- Only sexually promiscuous people and drug users are at risk of HBV infection.
- Manufacturers and the government set recommendations to benefit themselves.
- Hepatitis B is not serious.
- Hepatitis B is not a problem in the U.S.
- Parents should not be required to vaccinate their children, especially for a disease that is not easily communicable.

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “Hospitals routinely give newborns a hepatitis B injection shortly after birth. This vaccine contains brain and nerve damaging ingredients, including aluminum hydroxide. (Aluminum has been linked to Alzheimer’s.)”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “After many vaccinated newborns died and thousands suffered serious side effects, including seizures and permanent brain damage, the dangers of the hepatitis B vaccine were brought to the public’s attention by ABC’s 20/20 in 1999.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “Since 1991, the hepatitis B vaccine has been responsible for over 25,000 adverse reactions including hundreds of deaths, according to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “Serious immune and neurological diseases including blood disorders and chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia have been associated with the hep B vaccine but in particular it has been shown vaccines can cause insulin dependent diabetes in children and the hep B vaccine is the worst offender, causing a 50% increased risk for this form of diabetes.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “The AIDS ‘virus’ was introduced into the American population via a hepatitis B vaccine experiment.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “As vaccine mandates have increased in the USA so its child mortality has increased... The cot deaths [SIDS] increase occurred **THREE MONTHS** after the introduction of the nationwide blanket administration of the first hepatitis B vaccine immediately after birth.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “Since it has been shown that less than 10% of doctors report adverse reactions and many vaccine reactions are now diagnosed as SIDS or Shaken Baby Syndrome, there is no accurate accounting of just how many children and adults are suffering an adverse reaction to this vaccine.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “Finally in July 1999, the CDC reversed its ill-advised mandate on giving the hepatitis B vaccine to newborns. Nevertheless, despite a decade of problems, and virtually no clinical control studies proving safety or efficacy, the ACIP once again recommends in its 2002 immunization schedule that newborns be injected with the hepatitis B vaccine.”

Hepatitis B vaccine is not safe

- “An independent review of the VAERS data; publications by governmental, pro-vaccine, and anti-vaccine groups; and a sample of medical literature leads to the following conclusion: for most children, the risk of a serious vaccine reaction may be 100 times greater than the risk of hepatitis B.”

Only certain people are at risk

- “... the disease is usually transmitted through blood, shared needles and ‘multiple sex partners.’ We would hope that a newborn would be considered extremely low risk for contracting hepatitis B infection through multiple sex partners!!!”

Only certain people are at risk

- “In the U.S., the hepatitis B disease mainly infects intravenous drug users, homosexuals, prostitutes, and promiscuous heterosexuals... How could a newborn baby possibly get hepatitis B if the mother was screened and tested negative? ...Unless a newborn child is having unprotected sex or sharing needles with an infected junkie, it is extremely unlikely to get the hepatitis B disease. So then why are most U.S. babies inoculated at birth?...”

Only certain people are at risk

- “The new vaccine recommendations to expose infants to this dangerous vaccine just don’t make any sense when you consider that nearly 90% of the cases of hepatitis B are from sexual contact. These recommendations are inexcusable.”

Only certain people are at risk

- “... the government’s public health officials could not effectively vaccinate intravenous drug users and prostitutes. Therefore, they are forcing *all* children—even those not at risk—to be vaccinated against hepatitis B... In other words, the government could not force adults in the high-risk behavior groups to accept the hepatitis B vaccine, so they are going after newborns and young children—the groups least likely to contract or transmit the disease.”

Manufacturers & gov't make recs to benefit themselves

- “Parents should be aware that the hepatitis B vaccine is not administered for the well-being of their child. Rather, it is delivered by the long arm of some incompetent and mindless bureaucracy in the name of stamping out a disease most babies can’t possibly get.”

Manufacturers & gov't make recs to benefit themselves

- “The Drug Company/CDC/FDA alliance has really pulled the wool over the medical profession’s eyes with the hepatitis B vaccine. The American Pediatric Society (sic) bought into the alliance’s sales pitch and now recommends that all infants get this vaccine at birth. So now the first thing most babies get in life is a shock to their immune system from a vaccine against a non-existent risk of contracting hepatitis B.”

Manufacturers & gov't make recs to benefit themselves

- “... in order for federal health officials to achieve their goal of a 100% vaccination rate with new vaccines marketed by drug companies, they must persuade states to turn federal vaccine policies into state law.”

Manufacturers & gov't make recs to benefit themselves

- “This is simply a case of ravenous corporate greed and mindless bureaucracy teaming up to overwhelm common sense.”

Manufacturers & gov't make recs to benefit themselves

- “The central fact, and the one that helps to explain these insane recommendations [birth dose], is that that the maker of hepatitis B vaccine, [one company name deleted here], makes one billion dollars a year from this vaccine. A billion dollars a year goes a long way toward influencing public policy.”

Manufacturers & gov't make recs to benefit themselves

- “Hepatitis B vaccination is an extremely lucrative business.”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “A simple therapy for hepatitis is available but the allopaths won’t use it due to medical politics. So far, I have never seen a case of acute viral hepatitis which was treated immediately with intravenous sodium ascorbate in the acute stage which ever persisted and went on to the chronic stage... It confounds me as to why this inexpensive, simple, nontoxic treatment will not be applied to patients.”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “There is doubt that a virus even exists!”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “And what about long-term risk from chronic hepatitis B?... It is not unusual for hepatitis B virus antigenemia to resolve after 20 to 30 years. Even the chronic carrier state will eventually resolve, at least for some.”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “As for the alleged risk of acquiring liver damage or hepatocellular carcinoma from hepatitis B, and implied to be quite large by the CDC, according to *American Family Physician*, ‘In the United States, alcoholic cirrhosis more commonly leads to primary hepatic cancer than does chronic hepatitis B infection.’”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “Hepatitis B is not a killer disease for most... according to *Harrison's*, in cases of acute hepatitis B ‘most patients do not require hospital care’ and ‘95% of patients have a favorable course and recover completely...”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “The possibility of contracting the disease is exceedingly difficult for children and only 1.25% of those that are exposed will actually develop the most serious complication! This type of a ‘protecting the needle in the haystack’ medicine is absurd at best, dangerous at worst.”

Hepatitis B is not a serious disease

- “When liver toxicity develops, then as long as sufficient vitality exists, the body will attempt remedial action in the form of *liver inflammation*, a condition that medical authorities refer to as *hepatitis*. The purpose of inflammation is to reduce the liver’s toxicity level and to carry out healing and repair. What I am therefore saying is that hepatitis is not the disease, but in fact, the *cure*.”

Hepatitis B is not a problem in the U.S.

- “Hepatitis B is a rare, mainly blood-transmitted disease. In 1996 only 54 cases of the disease were reported to the CDC in the 0-1 age group. There were 3.9 million births that year, so the observed incidence of hepatitis B in the 0-1 age group was just 0.001%.”

Hepatitis B is not a problem in the U.S.

- “The statistic often quoted is that there are 25,000 kids infected with hepatitis B. After repeatedly asking the question as to how the CDC arrived at this number, Harold S. Margolis, MD, Chief of the Hepatitis Branch of the CDC, finally admitted that 25,000 kids is simply an estimate. They have no hard proof that there are definitely 25,000 kids with hepatitis B.”

Hepatitis B is not a problem in the U.S.

- “The hepatitis B vaccine is widely promoted, even mandated, based on the proposition that the hepatitis B virus is both serious and widespread. Unfortunately, the statistics and ‘science’ used to promote this idea are of questionable validity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have made highly discrepant claims about the incidence of new infections each year.”

Hepatitis B is not a problem in the U.S.

- “In 1991, media reports generated by CDC used hepatitis B disease statistics that were not anchored in documented fact but are still used today to promote mass hepatitis B vaccination. Most of the inflated disease statistics originate with statements generated by the Centers for Disease Control...The CDC gives no scientific reference for this data other than the CDC.”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “The National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC) maintains that federal and state public health officials are promoting forced vaccination with hepatitis B vaccine without truthfully informing the public about the risks of hepatitis B disease in America or the known and unknown risks of hepatitis B vaccine.”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “You are not required by law to vaccinate your [child], nor to listen to doctors’ coercive speeches and intimidation tactics.”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “As state health departments accumulate power and money to force vaccination with all federally recommended vaccines, including hepatitis B vaccine, child and adult citizens are punished by both federal and state economic sanctions for refusing to comply.”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “Refusal to be injected with hepatitis B vaccine can result in citizens being denied an education, including enrollment in daycare, elementary school, high school, college, and graduate school; denial of health insurance; denial of employment; denial of federal entitlement benefits for poor children including food under the WIC program and medical care under Medicaid.”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “Is forced hepatitis B vaccination paving the way for forced vaccination with AIDS vaccine?”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “Mandatory vaccination is the most repugnant idea ever put forth by organized medicine... The demand to yield to MANDATORY injection of a foreign substance into a human body under circumstances that highly intelligent specialists in all fields of scientific endeavor consider to be, at the very minimum, highly controversial, cannot AND WILL NOT be tolerated.”

Parents should not be required to vaccinate their child

- “If parents are not even allowed to reject questionable vaccines for preventative disease, such as hepatitis B, what then will be forced upon their children in the future? Where do we draw the line for vaccinating children?”



Impending Doom!!
Concerned Parents for Vaccine Safety

In summary...

- Some of these arguments are based on outright lies.
- Some use facts to draw false conclusions.
- In general, there is some truth in the overarching argument that low-risk newborns are being vaccinated because it's more difficult to vaccinate at-risk adolescents and adults. Parents are not likely to be interested in vaccinating their infant to promote a public health agenda.

What to say?

We vaccinated infants against hepatitis B because...

1. Unvaccinated infants born to a HBsAg-positive mother have a 90% chance of becoming chronically infected, with a 15%-25% chance of dying of liver cancer or cirrhosis later in life. Yes, maternal screening should tell us which mothers are infected, but not all mothers are screened and there are errors in testing and recording made at all stages in the process. Vaccinating all infants is the only way to make sure we're catching all such babies at risk.

References

- In two surveys conducted by IAC, state and local hepatitis B coordinators reported more than 500 medical errors discovered through their perinatal hepatitis B prevention programs. Many of these errors involved misinterpreting or mistranscribing hepatitis screening test results, or ordering the wrong hepatitis B screening test. Such errors can lead to a mother being documented as HBsAg-negative, when she is actually HBsAg-positive.

www.immunize.org/birthdose

www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2062.pdf

We vaccinate infants against hepatitis B because...

2. Horizontal transmission happens--young children can get infected with HBV from other children or family members.

Two-thirds of children infected with HBV during childhood did not have HBsAg-positive mothers.

30%-50% of those infected before five years of age become chronic HBV carriers.

Approximately 16,000 children under 10 years of age were infected with HBV beyond the post-natal period each year before routine infant vaccination was recommended in 1991. Although these infections represented only 5%-10% of all persons with chronic infections in the United States at that time, it is estimated that 18% of all persons with chronic infection acquired their infections postnatally during early childhood.

References

- Armstrong GL, Mast EE, Wojczynski M, Margolis HS. Childhood hepatitis B virus infections in the United States before hepatitis B immunization. *Pediatrics*. 2001;108(5):1123-28
- Hurie MB, Mast EE, Davis JP. Horizontal transmission of hepatitis B virus infection to United States-born children of Hmong refugees. *Pediatrics*. 1992;89:269-273
- Franks AL, Berg CJ, Kane MA, et al. Hepatitis B virus infection among children born in the United States to Southeast Asian refugees. *N Engl J Med*. 1989;321:1301-1305

We vaccinate infants against hepatitis B because...

3. One can acquire HBV infection without engaging in so-called “risky” behavior. On the average, any baby born in the United States has a 5 percent chance of acquiring HBV infection during his or her lifetime.

Approximately 30% of those infected with HBV do not know how they contracted the virus.

People can get infected from a playmate’s bite, from body piercing, from blood contact at work, or even during a medical procedure.

Reference

- “Unusual Cases of Hepatitis B Virus Transmission”
www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2100nrs.pdf

We vaccinate infants against hepatitis B because...

4. Administration of the birth-dose of hepatitis B vaccine may increase completion rates for hepatitis B and other vaccines.

Reference

- Lauderdale DS, Oram RJ, Goldstein KP, Daum RS. Hepatitis B vaccination among children in inner-city public housing, 1991-1997. *JAMA*. 1999;282:1725-1730

In summary, we vaccinate infants against hepatitis B because...

- Administration of the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine at birth provides a safety net to protect infants of mothers whose hepatitis B surface antigen status is unknown, has become positive during the course of the pregnancy, was incorrectly recorded, or was not communicated to the birth hospital. In addition, administration of the birth-dose of hepatitis B vaccine provides protection to infants at risk of early childhood HBV infection, may increase completion rates for hepatitis B and other vaccines, and protects the child, adolescent, and adult against HBV infection from any source.

And because we care.



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