

To Whom It May Concern:

My daughter Kora received the hepatitis B shot the day we were discharged from the hospital. That night she stopped breathing. She was rigid and it took me about 20 seconds to get her to breath again this was followed by her crying while I looked into her terrified eyes. The next morning I told the physician assistant what had happened and she wasn't concerned. Over the next two months I witnessed this happen four other times. It wasn't until my mother witnessed it that I finally realized these episodes were not normal. My mother was changing Kora, who was now 8 weeks old; Kora again went rigid and wasn't breathing. My mom was in such a panic and she just kept saying, "something is wrong, something is wrong, she's not breathing and her color is off." We drove to the nearest hospital and were then transferred to a children's hospital.

After seeing two neurologists an ENT specialists and a pulmonologist we were told that she was experiencing periodic breathing. At her next well visit I had printed out some information about periodic breathing and I expressed my thoughts and why I believed that it was not accurate. She didn't fit the criteria at all. She was not experiencing clusters of breaths separated by short periods of not breathing lasting no longer than 10 seconds. She was terrified and she was rigid and awake and her skin changed colors and it lasted way longer than 10 seconds. When I told my pediatrician that I didn't feel comfortable vaccinating until we knew what was wrong. He didn't say anything. He just nodded. Months later I realized what that nod meant to me and to this day I am so thankful.

At that point I turned to my faith. I connected deeper than I have ever in my life and I realized how vaccinations go against every one of my personal religious and spiritual beliefs. We are created perfectly with no flaws. It is my religious belief that god created our immune systems to work in a certain way and vaccinations go against my gods will. I feel beyond discriminated against and saddened that there are people stating that these beliefs are not valid because many religions have accepted vaccinations. There may be many religions that have accepted vaccinations, but that doesn't effect my right to follow my personal religious convictions.

It has also been said that we still have a choice. We can vaccinate or we can homeschool. I don't see this as a choice. Personally, I see my daughters right to a public education being held hostage by coercion. I don't want to be forced to play Russian roulette with my daughter's life in order to send her to school. We are being told that we need to vaccinate to protect the immunocompromised children even though the adults who work within the school are not up to date on all doses. Furthermore, truly immunocompromised children can have detrimental setbacks by the common cold and many of these children are not in public schools because of this fact most have to avoid public spaces all together. I do have a question for all of you though. Who is going to protect Kora? What if she stops breathing for good after her next shot? Who is going to protect her?

Thank you for your time,
Stephanie O'Brien