

VACCINE FACTS from the CT CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICIANS

Childhood Vaccines

- Vaccines do not make a child sick with the disease, and they do not weaken the immune system. Vaccines introduce a killed/disabled antigen into the body so the immune system can produce antibodies against it and create immunity to the disease.
- Vaccines provide protection from 14 diseases by age 2.
- With combination vaccines this protection is given in 18 doses, 26 doses if not using combination vaccines.
- Alternative schedules offer no advantage and increase the risk of errors.
- The immune system responds to the number of antigens in vaccines. In the 1980's there were over 3,000 antigens; today's vaccines have less than 130 antigens.
- There are no fetal tissue cells in vaccines given to children.
- There is no evidence that vaccines cause autoimmune disorders.
- There are clear, evidence based guidelines on specific vaccines to be avoided in specific medical conditions.
- Pediatricians do not financially benefit from immunizing children.
- Immunizing US children born between 1994 and 2018 will prevent 419 million illnesses, help avoid 936,000 deaths and save \$1.9 trillion in total societal costs.

General Vaccine Safety

- Anaphylaxis following vaccine is rare, approximately one in one million doses.
- So few deaths can plausibly be attributed to vaccines that it is hard to assess the risk statistically.
- The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a no-fault alternative to the traditional legal system for resolving vaccine injury petitions.
- It was created in the 1980s, after lawsuits against vaccine companies and health care providers threatened to cause vaccine shortages and reduce U.S. vaccination rates, which could have caused a resurgence of vaccine preventable diseases.
- All vaccines are rigorously tested.
- Like anything else, vaccines are not perfect, but the benefits far outweigh the risks (the legal definition of "unavoidably unsafe")
- From 2006 to 2018 over 3.7 billion doses of covered vaccines were distributed in the U.S. For petitions filed in this time period, 7,031 petitions were adjudicated by the VICP Court, and of those 4,888 were compensated. This means that for every 1 million doses of vaccine that were distributed, approximately 1 individual was compensated.
- 70 percent of all compensation awarded by the VICP comes as result of a negotiated settlement between the parties in which HHS has not concluded, based upon review of the evidence, that the alleged vaccine(s) caused the alleged injury.
- Since 2017 most claims have been from adults, not children.