

Health Tips

Your Good Health Information From eDocAmerica

with

Dr. D



Printer Friendly



Click Here!

to forward this Health Tip to a friend

Health Tip: MMR vaccine and Autism: A Look at the Evidence



Autism is a chronic developmental disorder characterized by problems in social interaction, communication, and restrictive and repetitive interests and activities. The Centers for Disease Control released data in 2007 that indicated about 1 in 150 8-year-old children in the United States had an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This compares to a prevalence, which for decades, had stood at 4 to 5 per 10,000 children.

The MMR-Autism Connection. Because signs of autism commonly appear at 12 to 15 months, around the same time that children receive the MMR vaccine, concern arose that the vaccine was responsible for causing autism. These early signs of autism include:

- trouble interacting, playing with, or relating to others
- avoiding eye contact; not looking at people
- not pointing to objects to direct a parent's attention to things
- unusual movements, such as hand flapping, spinning, or tapping
- delays in developmental milestones or loss of milestones already achieved
- not using or understanding language

The specific agent in the MMR vaccine suspected of causing autism is a mercury-containing preservative called thimerosal. Mercury is a known neurotoxin, and it was theorized that multiple injections with thimerosal-containing vaccines could cause brain damage leading to autism.

Another piece of evidence linking MMR vaccine and autism was reported in a 1998 study evaluating autistic children with gastrointestinal problems. In this study, measles RNA was found in bowel tissue from children with autism who had received the MMR vaccine. It was speculated that the MMR vaccine had damaged the intestinal lining, allowing the entrance of certain proteins that were toxic to the developing brain.

Evidence Countering the MMR-Autism Connection:

1. An Italian study published in Pediatrics in 2009 compared the

eDocAmerica

Services Overview

Click HERE...

Unsubscribe



If you wish to [unsubscribe](#) from any eDocAmerica mailings, please click on the image above.

Register Now

If you have not yet used eDocAmerica to communicate with our physicians, we urge you to give it a try. Email us about this or

any other topic or question you have!



Visit the
eDocBlog



Forget your
Password?



Login
Here

We want to
hear from you!



neuropsychological performance, 10 years after vaccination, of 2 groups of children exposed to either higher or lower levels of thimerosal through immunization (whooping cough, not MMR). Of the 1,403 children who took a battery of brain function tests, researchers found only minimal differences in the two groups and that difference was attributed to "chance". If thimerosal had a detrimental effect on neuropsychological performance, it was assumed that a higher exposure should have caused more abnormalities than the lower exposure. This was not the case, however, in this group of children.

2. A 2008 study published in Public Library of Science revisited the previously mentioned study that found measles virus RNA in the intestinal tissue of a group of autistic children. This newer study sought to determine whether children with GI disturbances and autism were more likely than children with GI disturbances alone to have measles RNA in their intestinal tissue. The authors concluded that there was no difference between normal children and autistic children regarding the presence of measles virus RNA. They also found no connection between the time that the MMR vaccine was given and the onset of autism and/or GI disturbance.
3. Despite thimerosal removal from most vaccines (the preservative is still being used in certain flu shots, diphtheria and tetanus shots, as well as rarely-used anti-venom treatment), autism rates have not declined.
4. A study published in the journal Pediatrics in 2004 re-evaluated all of the studies between 1966 and 2004 that were conducted to explore the relationship between MMR vaccine and autism. These researchers concluded that there was no link between thimerosal-containing vaccines and autism. They also pointed out a number of flaws in studies that had been done previously that supported this link.
5. A 2002 study performed jointly by the CDC and the Danish Medical Research Council followed more than 500,000 children over 7 years. The conclusions drawn from this study was that there was no association between the age at the time of vaccination, the time since vaccination, or the date of vaccination and the development of autistic disorder.



The increased incidence of autism is truly alarming. It is still unclear, however, how much of this increase is due to an actual increase in the number of children with autism versus how much is due to more frequent detection and changes in how ASDs are identified and classified. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), created via a cooperative effort of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food

and Drug Administration (FDA) is continuing to collect information about the possible relationship between vaccines and autism as well as for other adverse-vaccine events and side effects.

While this week's Health Tip is far from an exhaustive review of the literature, several of the most recent and critically performed studies were presented. Worldwide, an estimated three million lives per year are saved through the use of vaccines. Considering the paucity of evidence linking vaccines and in

particular the MMR vaccine, to autism, abandoning its administration seems unwise.

Have you ever used eDocAmerica?

To register, just [Click Here](#) and follow the simple directions. The entire process should take less than 5 minutes.

You'll be glad you did.



11719 Hinson Road, Suite 130 Little Rock, Arkansas 72212

Toll Free 1-866-525-eDoc (3362) www.eDocAmerica.com

Copyright 1999-2009 eDocAmerica. All rights reserved. Patent Pending. [\[click here to unsubscribe\]](#)