

# Responding to Parents' Vaccine Concerns: What's in Our Toolbox?

Tammy Pilisuk, MPH

California Department of Public Health

Immunization Branch

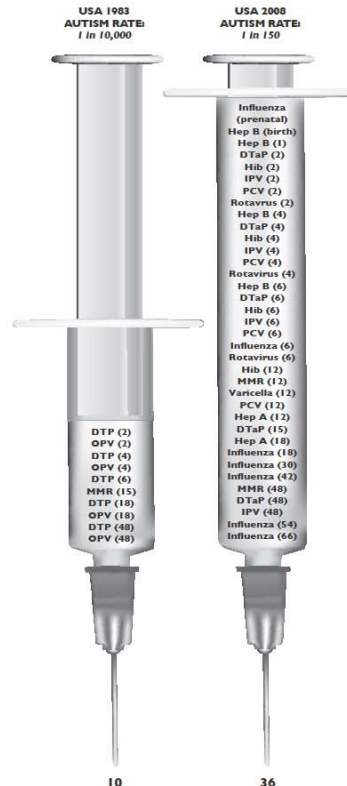
May, 2010



# ARE WE POISONING OUR KIDS IN THE NAME OF PROTECTING THEIR HEALTH?

# It's Scary Out There!

COMPARISON OF CDC MANDATORY SCHEDULE  
Children birth to six years (recommended month)



Green our vaccines.  
And administer them  
with greater care.

**Mercury. Aluminum. Formaldehyde. Ether. Antifreeze.** Not exactly what you'd expect—or want—to find in your child's vaccinations. Vaccines that are supposed to safeguard their health yet, according to our studies, can also do harm to some children.

The statistics speak for themselves. Since 1983, the number of vaccines the CDC recommends we give to our kids has gone from 10 to 36, a whopping increase of 260%. And, with it, the prevalence of neurological disorders like autism and ADHD has grown exponentially as well.

Just a coincidence? We don't think so. Thousands of parents believe their child's regression into autism was triggered, if not caused, by over-immunization with toxic ingredients and live viruses found in vaccines. The Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics dispute this but independent research and the first-hand accounts of parents tell a different story.

### Why are we giving our children so many more vaccines so early in life?

Why do we only test vaccines individually and never consider the combination risk of vaccines administered together? Given the dramatic rise of autism to epidemic levels, isn't it time for the scientific community to seriously consider the anecdotal evidence of so many parents? We urge the CDC and AAP to help us find the answers to these questions and learn why the increase in the number and composition of so many vaccinations has led to a surge in neurodevelopmental disorders. Our children deserve no less.

GENERATION RESCUE  
[www.generationrescue.org](http://www.generationrescue.org)

We want to thank Jim Carrey and Jerry McCarthy for their generous support of Generation Rescue and their never-ending commitment to solving the growing challenges of autism.

# Sound Familiar?

- Vaccines may cause autism
- “Too many too soon” overwhelm baby’s system
- Thimerosal = mercury poisoning
- “Toxic” ingredients (aluminum)
- VPDs gone anyway—why bother?
- VPDs “not a big deal,” give natural immunity
- Doctors influenced by Big Pharma
- Can’t trust gov’t safety testing
- Certain children can’t handle vaccines
- IZ schedule is too rigid

# Paradox of Empowerment

- Parents still likely to trust the doctor BUT...
- Want to do their own research

**Make your own choices!**

**Trust me!**



# Where do Moms Turn? Dr. Google!



## THE DOUGLASS REPORT

Real Health News from Medicine's Most Notorious Myth-Buster

“Immunizations are downright dangerous”



National Vaccine Information Center... very useful information about state vaccination laws and exemptions...



# I do my own research... a mom blogs

I studied, read and researched everything I could about vaccines. What I found out scared me to death.

The cover-ups, the pharmaceutical kick-backs to the medical community, doctor and pediatric lies, the public schools with their kick backs and rewards.

I could not believe what I discovered. Mercury in the vaccines (which causes neurotoxicity especially in fetuses and small infants)...thimerosal is linked to increase in autism in a confidential CDC study....

You could link all non-independent studies-which shows that there is no Mercury in vaccinations, and that it has no correlation to Autism directly to Pharmaceutical companies who paid for the study.

# Who's Providing Reassurance?

Read & share 24/7

You've got 10 minutes



# How do we define compassion?

*“...if you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we will ask you to find another health care provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers, nor would we recommend any such physician.”*

**AAP Chapter newsletter  
piece, posted online**

*“The bottom line is that more and more parents want options. If we don't provide them with options they are comfortable with, more parents will opt out of vaccines altogether. We will then see more and more disease fatalities and complications.”*

**Dr. Bob**

# Dr Sears Philosophy...

- Spread vaccines out over first few years—instead of first 18 months.... “But ultimately the end result is the same - a fully vaccinated child.” Gives:
- “the most important vaccines first, and slightly delays the less important vaccines.”
- 2 vaccines at a time to allow “a baby's body to better detoxify the chemicals.”
- 1 aluminum-containing vaccine at a time (instead of 4)
- 1 live-virus vaccine component at a time “to allow the body's immune system to better handle the live viruses in these vaccines.”
- “May decrease side effects; and makes it easier to figure out which vaccine a child is reacting to”

# Dr. Bob's Alt Schedule

- **2 mos** DTaP, rotavirus
- **3 mos** Pc, HIB
- **4 mos** DTaP, rotavirus
- **5 mos** Pc, HIB
- **6 mos** DTaP, rotavirus
- **7 mos** Pc, HIB
- **9 mos** Polio, Flu (2 doses)
- **12 mos** mumps, polio
- **15 mos** Pc, HIB
- **18 mos** DTaP,
- **21 mos** Flu
- **2 yrs** Rubella, Polio
- **2 1/2 yrs** Hep B, Hep A
- **3 yrs** Hep B, Hep A
- **4 yrs** DTaP, Polio, Flu
- **5 yrs** MMR, Flu
- **6 yrs** varicella
- **12 yrs** Tdap, HPV
- **12 yrs, 2mos** HPV
- **13 yrs** HPV, Mening.

Varicella

# Moms seek peer support

cafemom

139 members

## Yes I Vaccinate!

- This group is for those of us that "DO" vaccinate our children & are **tired of being judged for doing so..**

**If You selectively vaccinate your child, you are welcome**

2433 members

## Choosing Not to Vaccinate

- When I joined CafeMom I noticed that a lot of mothers did not vaccinate their children. I was appalled to notice that in almost every group moms **were being degraded for choosing not to vaccinate, to delay vaccinating or minimally vaccinate. I felt so alone in my decision...**

# Mommy Instinct

by [Petulant Pixie](#) May 3, 2005

OK, I got the vaccine sheet from the hospital, and there is **NO WAY** I am following the recommendations (which I understand are from the CDC, not a fly-by-night organization, I know, but still...)...

...it says at 2 months, they're supposed to get the DTP, Polio, Hib, and PCV. That's **SIX** different vaccines (since the DTP vaccinates against three illnesses). At 2 **MONTHS** of age. That just can't be good!

I was thinking to do the DTP at the 2 month check up. Then the Polio and the Hib three weeks later and then the PCV three weeks after that. That would leave 2 weeks between the PCV and the DTP boost at 4 months, then wait three weeks for the Polio and the Hib again...

**Has anyone done an alternate vaccine schedule? Can you tell me what you did and when, and how did it go?**

# What Can We Do?

- Peruse the web; see what they see!
- Read Offit's "*Autism's False Prophets*"
- **Empathize** with parents' fear, confusion
- Aim for "fence sitters"
- Know & share key resources

# Wading Through the Uncertainty: A Virtual Town Hall (1 hr)

Available on  
[www.WhyIChoose.org](http://www.WhyIChoose.org)





# Tool box for Providers

## Vaccine Safety Tips for Providers

- Talking w/ Parents About Vaccine Safety (IMM 915)
- Responding to Parents' Top 10 Concerns (IMM-917)
- Alternative Schedules: Helping Parents Separate Fact from Fear [available for download only on CIC site]
- Coming Soon! Vaccine Safety fact sheet for MAs (English & Spanish)

**Vaccine Safety: Responding to Parents' Top 10 Concerns**

**Talking with Parents About Vaccine Safety**

**Alternative Vaccine Schedules: Helping Parents Separate Fact from Fear**

**A Guide for Physicians**

Parents want to keep their children safe and healthy, they empower parents to make an informed decision about vaccinating their kids. Questions about the recommended immunization schedule creates an opportunity for you to listen and respond to requests for "alternative schedules," including the Dr. Bob Steer's schedule. We offer these tips to assist practitioners to respond effectively and compassionately and to build trusting relationships with parents and patients.

**CONCERN:** CDC schedules seem generic; alternative schedules cater to individual needs. The immunization schedule exists to protect everyone at the age they are most vulnerable to each disease. Children are vaccinated as soon as they are developmentally able to create an effective immune response.

Explain: Alternative schedules are not custom-made. There's actually what doctors do. Doctors assess a patient's medical history and give the best advice for each child. There are especially important to many medically-vulnerable kids (whose parents may be concerned about vaccines).

Ask: Do you have specific concerns about your child's health? Let's talk about it.

**CONCERN:** "Too many" vaccines, "too soon" seem to be harmful.

Are there more vaccines now than 20 years ago? Yes—and that's a good thing. Never received care causes from various diseases like meningococcal disease. This devastating infection can cause organ failure, limb amputations, and brain damage. Postponing shots increases the time a child's defenses. Recent outbreaks of measles and flu tell us that postponing shots puts healthy kids at risk for diseases none of us thought about come back.

Explain: A baby's immune system can handle multiple shots with ease and/or a child's mouth better than it can fight off a serious disease. Postponing shots means your child must get sick and risk serious complications. It's essential you want to protect your child, but alternative schedules take advantage of parents' worries; they're not based on science.

Ask: Which vaccines are causing you worry?

California Immunization Coalition (CIC) • 2016-2017

# Toolbox for Parents

**Vaccine Safety:**  
**10 Facts for Parents**



As a parent, you want to make the best decisions to protect your child. Being informed helps you talk with your doctor—and keep your family healthy. Your questions are important and you deserve reliable information to support your decisions. This fact sheet has been reviewed by medical experts. If you want to learn more, ask your doctor for a “consultation visit,” or check out the websites at the end.

**1. Are Vaccines safe?**  
Yes, vaccines are safe. Millions of children and adults are vaccinated every year. However, any medicine can cause reactions in some people. The most common **side effects**, are swelling or tenderness at the injection site and fever. Serious reactions are very rare, happening in 1-2 people out of a million shots given.

Thousands of people take part in clinical trials to test a vaccine before it is licensed by the **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**. After it's licensed, the **Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS)** helps track any health effect that happens hours, days, weeks, or even months later. Anyone can report a possible side-effect so that it can be studied. This **monitoring** helps ensure vaccines are safe.

**2. Why do children today get so many immunizations?**  
To save lives. Advances in medical science have developed vaccines to protect us against more than 15 dangerous diseases. Only a few years ago vaccines prevented just a small handful of diseases. Who benefits most? Babies. Their bodies may be too weak to fight off a serious disease. Many vaccine-preventable diseases can have dangerous complications. These include seizures, brain damage, blindness, and even death.

**3. Are diseases of the “old days” really still something to worry about?**  
Diseases do exist—though many young parents haven't seen them. This is the success of our country's immunization program. But people not vaccinated, especially children, are at risk for common illnesses like **diphtheria, whooping cough, and chicken pox**. Did you know that before the chicken pox vaccine, almost 11,000 Americans had to go to the hospital, and over 100 died, each year from chicken pox? Less common diseases like **measles, mumps, and rubella** happen unexpectedly and can spread quickly. Some

1  
California Immunization Coalition (CIC) – IMM 016 Sept. 2008

## 10 Facts for Parents (1MM-916) English & Spanish

### Resources listed

- AAP vaccine site
- Nat'l Network for Immunization
- FDA's Thimerosal FAQs
- Do Vaccines Cause That? (book for parents)
- Evaluating Health Info on the Web
- PKIDS (networking with other parents)

**ShotByShot.org** (personal stories)



# A few more tools...

- **HealthyChildren.org “Sound Advice”** (podcasts)
  - **Why Vaccines Don’t Cause Autism**  
Harvey Karp, MD
  - **Dispelling Common Vaccine Myths**  
Ari Brown, MD
- **Protect Tomorrow**  
[www.aap.org/protecttomorrow](http://www.aap.org/protecttomorrow)
  - PSA featuring grandparents
- **CHOP.edu (Vaccine Education Center)**
  - **Separating Fact From Fear**  
(online video)

# On the Horizon

- Fact sheet on alternative schedules



Recently aired on PBS  
Order at [ShopPBS.org](http://ShopPBS.org)

- Stay tuned! CDPH-commissioned vaccine safety documentary film (due in 2011)



# Your Thoughts Welcome

- How are you using existing materials?
- What other kinds of materials should be created?
- Can you help us locate parents impacted by VPDs to share their stories?

# Thank You!

contact information:

**Tammy Pilisuk, MPH**

**California Dept of Public Health**

**Immunization Branch**

**Richmond CA**

**[Tammy.Pilisuk@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Tammy.Pilisuk@cdph.ca.gov)**