

ARE SO MANY VACCINES COMPULSORY

Today's society is too sceptical about large number of vaccines i.e. injections (they call) to be given to the babies. Almost 90% of patients have common set of Questions, few enlisted as below:

1. Are so many vaccines compulsory and why not given at government centres if compulsory?
2. We did not had these vaccines in past, so why now?
3. Why are these vaccines so expensive?
4. What are the effects if we don't take it and are there any side effects if we take it?
5. In last blog on infection, I mentioned let immunity develop on exposure then why do I insist on vaccination?

Let us just brief up about VACCINES. VACCINE contains either whole or or a part of microorganism (germs) or duplicated immunogenic material of microorganism (antigen which induces immunity). In case of whole microorganism, it is either in killed form or live form. Live forms are chemically and/or biologically processed/ engineered in such a way that they lose disease causing potential but retains immunity stimulating potential.

Now let answer all common questions one by one.

- 1) Are so many vaccines compulsory and why not given at government centres if compulsory?

ANS: No, so many vaccines are not compulsory. Government can't make vaccines compulsory which they are unable to provide. India being such vastly populated country; it's difficult to implement it, though new government is trying it to do so in few states as pilot project for few vaccines. Now let me ask you indirect question; is mediclaim compulsory? Answer is no. but still most of us have it, right? Vaccines are child's medical insurance, the difference is adult mediclaim- we pay yearly premium covering most of the diseases whereas vaccination (child's mediclaim) covers individual diseases for prolonged period of time with premium amount being cost of vaccine and injection to child. Other major difference is adult mediclaim just takes care of your medical expenses during hospitalization whereas vaccination helps to avoid hospitalization for serious conditions against which individual vaccines protects child from.

- 2) Why so many now? We had few counted on our fingertips in past! Suddenly where these diseases had come from?

ANS: The diseases are in existence since ages. Just search about history of any disease against which we have vaccines on GOOGLE and even impact of vaccines on prevalence of disease, the data should be eye opener. The science s advancing hence the researches and so we are having vaccines which can either eliminate the probability of having disease or decrease the chances of developing it. In past when few vaccines were available, the infant mortality rate (IMR) was too high (114deaths/1000 live births in 1980 in India) which has come down to 34 deaths/1000 live births in 2016 in India, and much less in other countries. So as research will continue more vaccines will be available in future like malaria vaccine, dengue vaccine, chickungunya vaccine, etc.

3) Why are these vaccines so expensive?

ANS: As no one can predict the depth of well when it is full, similarly most of us don't know the success story or rather failure story of any medicine or vaccine. Many of the times after around 90-95 failed products, one successful product is generated; which further have to pass through stringent process of 4 phases of clinical trials, failure at any of above 4 stages, the product has to go to dustbin. Ultimately this cost also adds to vaccine's final cost. Still cost is too less compared to protection it offers, as final pricing has factored in statistically analysed cost effectiveness. There are some biostatistical tools which calculate the cost saved in community per unit of vaccine sold at any price.

4) What are the effects if we don't take it and are there any side effects if we take it?

ANS: No effects if you don't take it, nor side effects neither protection. It's like if you don't buy car and don't drive; you won't meet an accident (no side effects) neither any benefits of convenience to commute (effects). Since no one can predict whether your child will acquire vaccine preventable diseases in future, it's difficult to predict how beneficial it would be to your child, but as we discussed previously cost effectiveness is already established.

5) When I say let immunity develop on exposure, then why do I insist on vaccination?

ANS: Firstly, vaccination is also exposure to microorganism as in case of naturally acquired disease. Secondly, one need to understand vaccine is not available for all diseases, it is prepared only for diseases which are capable of giving serious outcomes. There are some infections which can take dangerous course from beginning itself before letting our host immunity to develop and such diseases can be prevented by immunization as body had ample time to generate immunity against them.

Every child has RIGHT TO HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES (Vaccination is one of the health services), let us all join hands to provide them there RIGHT TO HEALTH.

You can contact Dr Maulik Shah for understanding these strategies with reference to your child over the contact details on the website: <https://pediacareandcure.com/contact-us/>



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