

**Earthy Family** Fostering family wellness and natural interactions within our physical, social, emotional and spiritual environments

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## Vaccinations

**Vaccinations: Being Informed to Make a Choice**  
by Tabitha Tucker

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### Recommended Reading:

**Vaccinations in Canada : Political Immunity** by Kerstin Peterson; Alive no. 239 pg 30-33

**Natural Alternatives to Vaccination** by Zoltan Rona, MD; Alive Health Guide #7

### Related Websites

**Vaccination Risk Awareness Network** (Canadian Organization)

**Vaccine Website** – a variety of really detailed articles from various international sources

"Unlike some countries, immunization is not mandatory in Canada; it cannot be made mandatory because of the Canadian Constitution. Only three provinces have legislation or regulations under their health-protection acts to require proof of immunization for school entrance. Ontario and New Brunswick require proof for diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella immunization. In Manitoba, only measles vaccination is covered. It must be emphasized that, in these three provinces, exceptions are permitted on medical or religious grounds and reasons of conscience; legislation and regulations must not be interpreted to imply compulsory immunization."

Canadian National Report on Immunization, 1996  
Health Canada Website

As Health Canada states, vaccination is not mandatory

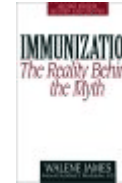
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**Vaccines: Are They Really Safe and..**



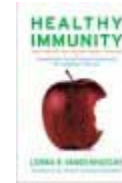
By Neil Z. Miller. The Immunization Decision: A Guide For Parents by Randall Neustaedter

**Immunization: The Reality Behind the...**



by Walene James

**Healthy Immunity: Scientifically Proven...**



by Lorna R. Vanderhaeghe

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and the act of vaccinating one's children is a decision for parents to make. It should be an informed decision. All parents want to do the best they possibly can for their children and the vaccination decision is definitely an area where the choices should be weighed carefully.

The current Canadian vaccine schedule includes 24 doses of 12 different vaccines by the age of 6 – starting for some infants within just a few hours of their birth. This is a drastic increase in the amount of vaccination ingredients being injected into young children in the last few years. There are now vaccines for diseases like chickenpox and measles which past mothers tried to expose their children to because they understood that once the bout of illness was over, they would have protection against that particular disease for life (and that catching it later in life could pose much greater risks).

After researching each vaccine and illness (which it is highly recommended you do as there are different risks associated with each disease and it's corresponding vaccine), you may decide that you only want to vaccinate for select illnesses and/or at a later stage than is recommended or you may feel that vaccination is not for you and your children. These are your choices to make, for it is a matter of your child's health.

This article will present a general outline of some of the issues you should be aware of, but it is highly recommended that you look beyond this article and educate yourself thoroughly about vaccinations and immune systems – read some of the fabulous books that have been written and engage in a discussion with a variety of health-care providers.

Above all, **be informed** and **whatever you decide be confident that it is the right choice for your family.**

### **What is the argument for vaccines (and who is making that argument)?**

The purpose of mass artificial immunization campaigns is to lower and even eradicate the incidence of certain diseases. The theory behind vaccines is that if you inject a small amount of the disease into the body, the body's defense system will rally to fight the injected material and produce antibodies to that particular illness. The body should remember what the disease looks like (for a few years) and anytime that disease shows up, the antibodies will be dispatched to kill it. Vaccines are reported to have a 90-95% effectiveness rate.

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The pharmaceutical industry, many doctors and virtually all health region boards argue that vaccines are required to fight disease and there is no doubt that vaccines are big business in North America. In 2001 5.4 billion dollars was spent on vaccines. This number is expected to rise to 10 billion dollars by 2006. This is a whole lot of money behind the argument for vaccines.

### **What is the argument against vaccines (and who is making that argument)?**

Injecting a virus directly into a child's bloodstream bypasses all of the other immune system filters and may overwhelm the inner immune protection systems whereas being exposed to virus and bacteria in the environment will stimulate and strengthen the immune system and normal development will occur.

-Neil Miller: Vaccines: Are They Really Safe and Effective?

### **Disease Rate of Decline Unaffected by use of Vaccines**

Several doctors, statisticians and scientists have pointed out that infectious diseases were in decline before the advent of mass vaccination campaigns. Factors such as improved nutrition, sanitation and hygiene are responsible for the decline of disease that started before vaccines were introduced. The introduction of vaccines created little difference in the rate of decline that had started up to 50 years before they hit the market.

### **Lack of Adequate Vaccine Testing**

One of the greatest reasons that many avoid or delay vaccinations is the fact that there is a lack of widespread, long-term testing done before they are released for mass use. Health Canada readily admits that not all side-effects may be detected before they are used in the general population. What's worse, the monitoring of the vaccines once they are released is imperfect, at best. Adverse effects do not have to be reported at all, but if they are, they must fall within certain time frames. It is estimated that only about 10% of all adverse reactions are actually reported in Canada. Even with this imperfect system however, there have been instances where enough adverse reactions were reported to have amendments made to certain vaccines.

- The oral polio vaccine (OPV) was determined to cause polio in some people. This vaccine was replaced.
- The original pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine caused high fevers, seizures and collapse in some

infants. This vaccine was replaced in Canada in 1998.

All right, they feel that they have worked these problems out. But what about the next vaccine to prove itself harmful? ( The hepatitis B vaccine, the only vaccine left in Canada to contain mercury-containing Thimersol comes to mind). For more info on this vaccine, [click here](#).

Since there is a lack of widespread testing done before release, it stands to reason that only after public release and the subsequent injection into thousands and thousands of babies and children will we really know how vaccines affect health. And since adverse reactions have to be reported within short time frames, will we ever know the long-term health implications?

### **Suspected Links to Other Serious Health Issues**

Vaccines have been suspected in the start of the AIDS virus, soaring autism rates and even Shaken Baby Syndrome. While there have been studies that both support and reject these hypotheses, reports by the Immunization Safety Review Committee of the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine (American) found that they could not determine whether or not there was a causal relation between a specific vaccine and an adverse effect in 2/3 of the cases. Proponents of vaccines have used these reports to declare that there is no causal relationship between vaccines and serious adverse effects. Truthfully though, the reports came back without answers – they simply did not have enough evidence to draw firm conclusions.

### **Germ Theory Questioned**

Basic knowledge available to us tells us that germs cause disease. This theory is being disputed, however, by some doctors and researchers who report that germs, rather than causing disease, are a sign of disease. This seemingly insignificant play on words actually requires a massive shift in our view of disease and illness. If germs cause disease we may be able to inject a very weakened version of that germ directly into the bloodstream to rally the body's immune system and this may be effective for a number of years. However, if germs are a sign of disease, we need to do all we can to build our immune systems naturally so that when the body encounters a virus in the environment, it has the capability to fight the disease on it's own – and provide lifelong protection when it encounters the same virus. This theory extends from the theory that the body has the ability to heal itself. For more information on this, *Immunization: The Reality Behind the Myth* is well worth reading.

### **What other things will boost children's immune systems?**

Recommend: [Super Healthy Kids](#): Strengthening Your Child's Resistance to Disease; Jane Sheppard e-book

Whether you choose to vaccinate your children for all of the vaccines, for a select few or not at all, you are choosing so because you are invested in maximizing your child's health. There are several other things you can do to promote a healthy immune system and, regardless of your vaccination decisions, the following suggestions will help.

#### **Extended Breastfeeding**

The benefits of breastfeeding extend beyond the first year and continue as long as your child is nursing. There are health advantages and immune system benefits to nursing children as they grow from infancy through the toddler years and the breastfeeding relationship is perfectly honed to provide the nursing with his/her precise requirements in terms of protein, fats, and antibodies and this differs with each feed. Of course the added touching and cuddling helps the immune system as well.

#### **Healthy Lifestyle**

One of the best ways to ensure a healthy immune system is to get adequate rest and exercise and a healthy, balanced diet. A childhood with low levels of stress, plenty of loving touch, lots of fresh air and a great diet will do much to ensure optimal health for years to come. The greatest gifts children can receive are healthy adult models who practice what they teach so be sure to create a family environment that promotes a healthy lifestyle for all family members. Try getting outside each and every day, eat healthy meals, drink plenty of water and take care of the emotional and social needs of each family member. Above all, have fun as a family. Laughter reduces stress and stress has a significant impact on the immune system. For more information on healthy lifestyle choices, check out our section on foods for the healthy family.

#### **Probiotics**

Probiotics are the "good" or "friendly" bacteria that prevent the overgrowth of unfavorable intestinal bacteria and microorganisms. Probiotics are essential to a fully-functioning digestive system. Probiotics are found in foods such as yogurt, kefir, tempeh, miso, sauerkraut, and sourdough bread. There are also supplements available in several forms from health food stores and some brands carry formulas specially designed for children.

### **Homeopathic Nosodes**

Homeopathy is based on the principle that like cures like and that anything with the capability of harming the body also has the power to heal. Homeopathic nosodes actually work on similar principles as vaccines, however the nosodes contain extremely smaller quantities of the materials. Whereas vaccines contain the very real presence of toxic microorganisms, homeopathic nosodes contain only an energy imprint. Remedies and nosodes are extremely dilute and are effective and safe for even the youngest of children. The nosodes are administered orally and can be used in place of vaccines. Consult a homeopathic doctor for more information on this alternative. Studies have shown them to be extremely effective.

*\*None of us at Earthy Family are doctors or health-care practitioners but we are a family concerned with doing the best we can for ourselves and our children. We strongly encourage you to become as informed about the vaccination decision as possible. Engage in discussions, read both sides of the arguments and, in the end, make a decision that you feel good about.*

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