

NEWS RELEASE

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MOTHERING MAGAZINE WARNS PARENTS ABOUT MERCURY IN FLU VACCINES.

Annual flu vaccinations for all infants and toddlers 6 through 23 months of age will be required in the United States, starting this fall, even though injected flu vaccines still contain mercury in the form of the preservative thimerosal. There is alarming evidence of a possible connection between the mercury found in vaccines and the spiraling rate of autism in children.

The EPA, the FDA, the US Public Health Service (USPHS), and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have all called for the elimination of mercury content in childhood vaccines and yet, no ban has been enacted and thimerosal remains in vaccines five years after the EPA warning.

Fluzone, the only flu vaccine licensed for infants 6 to 23 months of age, comes in two versions. One contains less than 0.3 micrograms of mercury and is considered by the manufacturer to be thimerosal-free. The second version contains 25 micrograms of mercury, which could be as much as 25 times the safe level of mercury suggested by the EPA. Infants are expected to get two flu shots a year the first year.

On May 18th, The Institute of Medicine (IOM) shocked independent researchers and parents of autistic children by concluding that there is no link between thimerosal in childhood vaccines and autism. Just two weeks later, however, the Office of Special Counsel asked the Congressional Oversight Committee for Health and Human Services to investigate allegations of possible vaccine conflicts of interest within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the FDA and the CDC, which sponsored the IOM hearings on thimerosal and autism.

Just three days after the IOM findings were released; Representatives Dave Weldon, MD (R-FL) and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) introduced a bi-partisan bill (HB4169) that would remove vaccines that contain thimerosal from the market by January 2005. Also in May, Thomas J. Vilsack of Iowa became the first governor to sign into law a state bill banning the use of thimerosal in vaccines.

In June, Dr. Mady Hornig of Columbia University released the results of her "first of its kind" research study, which found that the administration of low-dose mercury—like that in childhood vaccines—can lead to behavioral and neurological changes in the developing brain.

Parents believe that mercury is out of vaccines and may not think to ask when they get flu vaccines for their families in the fall. While health organizations may be more concerned about pandemics than about thimerosal, parents must think twice.

Mothering Magazine recommends that parents who choose the flu vaccine request thimerosal-free vaccines and that they not combine the flu vaccine with other vaccines. Additionally, flu vaccines with thimerosal are not prudent for pregnant women.

For more information, read the Featured Story in the July-August 2004 *Mothering* Magazine

- **THE FLU VACCINE AND YOU: *What Parents Need to Know about the New Recommendations***
A comprehensive look at the flu vaccine, thimerosal, and the dangers of mercury poisoning. (page 40)
- ***Mercury Must Be Removed from Childhood Vaccines—NOW!*** By Peggy O'Mara (page 8)
- If you decide to vaccinate, choose thimerosal-free vaccines. (List and link on page 45)
- A compelling letter to the government written by the parents of mercury-injured children. (page 48)

See Action Alert at Mothering.com: <http://www.mothering.com/action-alerts/index.shtml#autism>