



Sensible Action For Ending Mercury-Induced  
Neurological Disorders

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# SafeMinds' Report Shows CDC Ignored Autism-Mercury Data

## Documents Show Agency Discovered Elevated Autism Risks and Withheld From Public/Congress

Washington, D.C.—SafeMinds—America's leading scientific organization investigating the links between mercury and autism —has released a report showing that government analysts were aware of a potential vaccine-autism link as early as 1999, but hid that information from the public and Congressional inquiry.

The SafeMinds study, "*Generation Zero*," details these initial findings based on data contained in spreadsheets and related email traffic from former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) research fellow, Dr. Thomas Verstraeten. In his analysis, secured by SafeMinds through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, Verstraeten examined the connection between mercury exposure and childhood disease for the first time. SafeMinds board member and published researcher Mark Blaxill prepared the review and chose the title "*Generation Zero*" for two reasons: 1) the CDC analysis compared autism risks in children with high thimerosal exposure levels to children with zero exposure levels, a logical approach they abandoned later; and 2) these CDC analyses preceded four subsequent generations of reports that an earlier Safe Minds study designated Generation One through Four.

***"Verstraeten's initial analysis reveals two important facts,"*** Blaxill said. ***"First, CDC official were aware in 1999 of an eleven fold increase in autism risk in children who received vaccines containing thimerosal versus children who received no exposure. Second, in four subsequent generations of reports using this data, the CDC never revealed their initial risk findings to the Institute of Medicine, nor to Congress when called upon to present evidence during relevant hearings."***

Thimerosal, a mercury-containing preservative used for years in many vaccines, lies at the center of the vaccine-autism debate. Although the dangers of early childhood mercury exposure have long been recognized, vaccines, including those given to infants, still contain this potent neurotoxin.

"In the most straightforward analysis of the risk of mercury exposure in children, Verstraeten discovered significant extremely elevated risks of autism as well as a range of childhood developmental disorder including ADHD and sleep disorders. In emails accompanying his analyses, Verstraeten invited his colleagues to find ways to explain away these findings. Predictably, his alarming analyses were suppressed by the CDC. Only watered-down reports were ever shared and fourth of these was made public several years late, discounting any autism-mercury link," continued Blaxill.

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