

KNOW THE FACTS

MERCURY *is*
a NEUROTOXIN

EPA estimates that one in every six women has levels of mercury in their bodies that could cause harm to their unborn children.

It is inconsistent and unwise to counsel pregnant women to avoid seafood, which contains mercury, while recommending vaccines containing mercury.

Mercury rapidly crosses the placenta and accumulates in the fetus at even higher levels than the mother.

Scientific studies have documented that the mercury used in vaccines enters into the brain and can interrupt critical stages of brain development.

Thimerosal containing flu vaccines contain 250 times above the levels identified as a hazardous waste. Unused flu vaccine should be returned to the manufacturer for appropriate disposal.

A 2006 review published in the Lancet found that a placebo was as effective as flu vaccine in children under two. Simple techniques, such as avoiding those with flu-like illnesses and good hand washing can prevent many cases of the flu.

ABOUT SAFEMINDS

The Coalition for SafeMinds (Sensible Action for Ending Mercury-Induced Neurological Disorders) mission is to end the harm to human health from early life exposures to manmade sources of mercury, the second most toxic substance on earth. Our mission will be achieved through research, increased awareness and advocacy.

SafeMinds is the largest private charitable non-profit organization funding groundbreaking research on mercury and autism. Since its inception in 2000, SafeMinds has funded almost one million dollars in research. For more information please visit www.safeminds.org.



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FLU VACCINES what you need to know

You want to do everything right for your child,
and would never knowingly allow someone
to inject a neurotoxin into your infant.

Before getting a flu shot, you need
to know this:

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SAFEMINDS ALERT: FLU VACCINES - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In March of 2001, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) issued a statement warning pregnant women and young children not to eat fish containing high levels of mercury because it causes neurological problems in children.

Yet, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now recommends that these same women and young children (ages 6 to 59 months) should get influenza vaccines. Many influenza vaccines contain mercury, from the preservative thimerosal, in amounts greater than the EPA recommended safe levels.

SafeMinds is deeply concerned that the risks of mercury-containing influenza vaccines outweigh the benefits for pregnant women, infants and children. Mercury is known to be highly toxic to brain tissue and can interrupt critical stages of brain development.

A large-scale scientific study in approximately 50,000 pregnant women and their infants over five flu seasons found no difference in the risk for developing influenza illness among those who received the influenza vaccine during pregnancy and those who did not receive the vaccine.

Reviews in the medical journal The Lancet found a lack of health benefit of influenza vaccine for children under 2 and significantly increased rates of vaccine related adverse events in children.

Today, some vaccines, like the influenza vaccine, contain as much as 25 micrograms of mercury, over 10 times the safe limit for an infant and roughly 2 times over the safe limit for adults. All vaccines on the immunization schedule are available in mercury-free, or mercury reduced, versions.

IF YOU ARE PREGNANT OR HAVE SMALL CHILDREN . . .

- Look at the evidence and decide if you consider the influenza virus a threat to your family.
- If you decide to vaccinate, request mercury-free influenza vaccines for yourself and your children.
- Do not combine the flu vaccine with other vaccines.
- If you are not able to get mercury-free flu vaccines, reconsider your choice.

WHAT IS THIMEROSAL?

Thimerosal contains ethyl-mercury, a documented and dangerous neurotoxin. It is used as an inexpensive preservative in vaccines. Developed in the 1930's and marketed by Eli Lilly, thimerosal has never been tested using modern safety standards.

In 1982 an expert FDA panel found thimerosal to be toxic and caused cell death. In 2001 the Institute of Medicine recommended that "government agencies give full consideration to removing thimerosal from all vaccines administered to infants, children or pregnant women."

In addition, a 2005 study funded by the NIH found that ethyl mercury used in vaccines crosses into the brain of infant primates, resulting in appreciable levels of mercury being trapped in the brain.

Contact your health care provider well in advance to request a mercury-free influenza vaccine this season.

Mercury-free influenza vaccine - 2008/2009:

FluMist® – MedImmune: approved for children 2 years and older, mercury-free

Fluarix™ – GlaxoSmithKline: mercury-free

Fluzone® - Sanofi Pasteur: request pre-filled syringe, mercury-free version

Mercury containing influenza vaccines - 2008/2009:

FluLaval™ - GlaxoSmithKline: 25 mcg of mercury

Fluvirin® – Chiron: 25 mcg of mercury

Fluzone® – Sanofi Pasteur: multi-dose 5 mL vial, 25 mcg of mercury

GET ALL THE FACTS!

All vaccines may pose some risk, with or without mercury content. However, the influenza vaccine is of great concern, as much of what is available contains high levels of mercury. SafeMinds recommends that consumers read package inserts for any vaccine prior to immunization.

All influenza vaccines offered this season are classified by the FDA as Category C, which means either studies in animals have revealed adverse effects on the fetus and there are no controlled studies in women, or studies in women and animals are not available. Below is information from package inserts for three commonly used influenza vaccines.

FLUARIX™ - GLAXOSMITHKLINE: This vaccine has not been evaluated for carcinogenic and mutagenic potential, or for impairment of fertility. Animal reproduction studies have not been conducted and it is not known whether FLUARIX™ can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman or affects reproduction capacity. FLUARIX™ should be given to a pregnant woman only if clearly needed.

FLUZONE® - SANOFI-AVENTIS: Animal reproduction studies have not been conducted and it is not known whether FLUZONE® can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman or affects reproduction capacity. FLUZONE® should be given to a pregnant woman only if clearly needed.

FLUVIRIN® - CHIRON: Controlled studies have not been conducted to demonstrate safety in pregnant women. The clinical judgment of the attending physician should prevail at all times in determining whether to administer the vaccine to a pregnant woman. Animal reproduction studies have not been conducted and it is not known whether FLUVIRIN® can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman, or affects reproduction capacity. FLUVIRIN® should be given to a pregnant woman only if clearly needed.