

## How Should Hepatitis B Vaccination Be Used?

A “given” that I believe has been established by the preceding material is that hepatitis B vaccination can be followed by the development of an acquired autoimmune disease. In view of this, what should be the position of a physician who administers the vaccine and by the recipient of the vaccine, or the parent of a child to whom it is suggested that the vaccine be administered?

Who should get vaccinated against hepatitis B vaccine?

1. Everyone admits that individuals because of their occupation or profession who may be exposed to the bodily fluids should receive the vaccination. Individuals with strong family histories of autoimmune diseases or of HLA patterns that increase their risk of these diseases may choose to opt out of the vaccination.<sup>1,2</sup> It would not be unreasonable to ask individuals who opt out of hepatitis B vaccine to have their blood tested for hepatitis B each year.
2. Patients who require multiple transfusions of blood or blood substances should receive hepatitis B vaccination.
3. Babies whose mothers test positive for hepatitis B exposure or whose mothers have a lifestyle that engenders this disease should be vaccinated. Incidentally, requiring all pregnant women to be tested for hepatitis B infection would obviously help to protect some babies. Ironically, legislation of this type would have little chance of passing this legislature.
4. Children who are in day care with recent Asian adoptees are candidates for hepatitis B vaccinations.
5. Asian adoptees should also be vaccinated.
6. Individuals with lifestyles that predispose them to hepatitis B should be vaccinated.

The sine qua non of any vaccination with hepatitis B should be an informed consent in which the material we have summarized is carefully discussed with the patient or the parent involved. This informed consent should include the fact that autoimmune diseases have followed hepatitis B vaccination.

It challenges common sense to give babies who have little or no chance of exposure to hepatitis B a vaccine that has the possible complication of hepatitis B vaccine. The epidemiologic justification made by the government agencies tied to the CDC should be reviewed by a physician or hospital who gives hepatitis B vaccine to a newborn to determine if the epidemiologic data of the government that justifies universal hepatitis B vaccination is convincing.

The one hundred ninety-eight case reports about adverse events that followed hepatitis B vaccine and the definitive paper by Hernan that showed a three-fold increase in MS in recipients of hepatitis B vaccine should alert physicians that they have a moral and legal responsibility to inform each patient or each child's parents that autoimmune diseases probably is caused in some cases, by hepatitis B vaccine. Perceptive patients might well want to review the evidence on this website

To accept the assurance of the pharmaceutical companies, the CDC, and the FDA that the vaccine is entirely safe will put the physician who orders the vaccination or the institution that condones it, under not only moral jeopardy but legal jeopardy as well.

Literally thousands of patients have filed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act. The Justice Department whose "special masters" try claims against the government for hepatitis B vaccine has yet to admit that hepatitis B vaccine has damaged a single claimant. However, they have awarded money in some cases, with a secrecy provision. If these cases could be made public under the Freedom of Information Act, perhaps the thousands of other claimants would receive payments as well. It seems more likely that jury trials against pharmaceutical companies for "failure to warn" might eventually be necessary to adjudicate these claims.

It goes without saying, that the story of adverse reactions that follow hepatitis B vaccination is not finished.

## REFERENCES

1. Kaplanski G, Retornaz F, Durand J, Soubeyrand J. Central nervous system demyelination after vaccination against hepatitis B and HLA haplotype. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry*. 1995 Jun;58(6):758-9.
2. Herroelen L, de Keyser J, Ebinger G. Central-nervous-system demyelination after immunisation with recombinant hepatitis B vaccine. *Lancet*. 1991 Nov 9;338(8776):1174-5.