

HEPATITIS B DISEASE AND VACCINE FACTS

- People at high risk for getting hepatitis B disease (which is transmitted by coming into direct contact with an infected person's body fluids) are IV drug users, prostitutes, prisoners, sexually promiscuous persons and babies born to **infected** mothers. (1)
- 90-95% of all hepatitis B cases recover completely after 3 to 4 weeks of nausea, fatigue, headache, arthritis, jaundice and tender liver. (2)
- Up to 17 percent of all hepatitis B vaccinations are followed by reports of fatigue and weakness, headache, arthritis and fever of more than 100 F (3) The vaccine can cause death, according to a 1994 Institute of Medicine report. (4)
- According to Merck and Company: "The duration of the protective effect of [the vaccine] in healthy vaccinees is unknown at present and the need for booster doses is not yet defined."
- In 1996, there were 10,637 cases of hepatitis B reported in the U.S. and the CDC stated that "*Hepatitis B continues to decline in most states, primarily because of a decrease in the number of cases among injecting drug users and, to a lesser extent, among both homosexual and heterosexuals of both sexes.*" (5)
- In 1996, 279 cases of hepatitis B disease were reported to have occurred in the U.S. in children under 14 years old. (5)
- An historic report in 1994 published by the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences, reviewed the medical literature for evidence that vaccines, including hepatitis B vaccine, can cause a variety of immune and neurological health problems. An independent committee of physician experts concluded that **there were no case controlled observational studies or controlled clinical trials conducted on hepatitis B vaccine either before or after licensure to scientifically evaluate persistent reports that hepatitis B vaccine can cause sudden infant death syndrome; Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) and other central demyelinating diseases including transverse myelitis, optic neuritis, and multiple sclerosis; and immune system dysfunction including chronic arthritis.**

The IOM report concluded: "*The lack of adequate data regarding many of the adverse events under study was of major concern to the committee...the committee encountered many gaps and limitations in knowledge bearing directly or indirectly on the safety of vaccines. These include inadequate understanding of the biologic mechanisms underlying adverse events following natural infection or immunization, insufficient or inconsistent information from case reports and case series, inadequate size or length of follow-up of many population-based epidemiologic studies....*" (5)

- There are more than 200 vaccines being created by federal health agencies and drug companies, including Hepatitis C, D and E; Herpes simplex types 1 and 2; gonorrhea; rotavirus (diarrhea); Group A and B streptococcus; meningitis A, B and C; and HIV for AIDS. (6)

(1) *CDC Prevention Guidelines: A Guide to Action* (1997); (2) *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine* (1994); (3) Merck & Co. Hepatitis B Vaccine product insert (1993); (4) *Adverse Events Associated with Childhood Vaccines* (1994); (5) *Adverse Events Associated with Childhood Vaccines* (1994); (6) *The Jordan Report* (DHHS-1995).

<http://www.nvic.org/Diseases/hepBfacts.htm>