

Letter to the Editor: Vaccine Injuries

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I have a vaccine injured child in my family. He was born at Mount Desert Island Hospital quite healthy and was discharged. His mother was told to bring him back in a few days for his shots. Within hours of that he was taken by helicopter to Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, barely alive, and put on life support. He survived with many injuries. He has to go to a school for the deaf because he can't form words clearly, and thus communicates with sign language. His legs and hands are not fully functional so he limps to walk and his hands are permanently deformed.

The U.S. has one of the highest infant and maternal mortality rates of any developed nation, and we also have the highest vaccination rates. The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) has paid out more than \$3.7 billion for vaccine injuries and deaths since 1988. My family member was not one of them.

The Health Resources and Services Administration government website states that the "[VICP] may provide financial compensation to individuals who file a petition and are found to have been injured by a VICP-covered vaccine. It was created in the 1980s, after lawsuits against vaccine companies and health care providers threatened to cause vaccine shortages and reduce U.S. vaccination rates, which could have caused a resurgence of vaccine preventable diseases."

Right now there are two lawsuits against Merck. One of those is where former Merck scientists claim that Merck's faulty MMR vaccine has caused the United States to pay "hundreds of millions of dollars for a vaccine that does not provide adequate immunization."

A Ph.D. in immunology who recently submitted testimony before Congress stated clearly that people who have not received the vaccines IPV, DTaP, Hepatitis B and Hib pose no higher threat to the general public than those who have.

Just last week there was an outbreak of whooping cough in a Los Angeles school among 50 "vaccinated" students.

A warship was quarantined at sea as after booster shots of MMR were given out and at least 25 onboard became ill with parotitis, essentially mumps.

Lots to consider on both sides.

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