

The Truth About Flu Shots

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Well, here in NE Ohio, the leaves have started to turn, and the nights are getting cooler, and soon we'll see snow flakes in the air, if not on the ground. It's the time of year when people start seriously thinking about getting vaccinated against the flu, colds and even pneumonia. Would that be a wise move for you?

Each year when flu season rolls around, we're reminded how *important* flu shots are, especially for high-risk groups like infants, children, the elderly, and anyone with breathing or upper-respiratory disorders. Your doctor, your pharmacist, your friends and the media are all trumpeting the need for everyone to get their shots, so we take it for granted that it's the right thing to do... but is it, really?

Just a year ago, a study by the esteemed, Cochrane Collaboration appeared in the October 28, 2006 *British Medical Journal*.

Cochrane- an international, not-for-profit, independent body that critiques health care outcomes -- concluded that there is "***little scientific evidence backing the safety or effectiveness of the inactivated influenza vaccine in children.***"

Based on its review of prior influenza vaccine research, the Cochrane Collaboration called for a re-evaluation of the strategy of routinely promoting annual flu vaccinations in children as public health policy, noting that "large-scale studies assessing important outcomes and directly comparing vaccine types are urgently required." **That's because they don't exist, now!**

The National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC) -- a national non-profit, educational organization dedicated to the prevention of childhood vaccine injuries and deaths -- went even further. Supporting the Cochrane findings, the NVIC called for a halt on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation of "annual influenza vaccinations for infants and children" -- **at least until there is scientific evidence to back them up.**

NVIC president, Barbara Loe Fisher, believes that there's a huge gap between the scientific research on the influenza vaccine and government policies on it. In particular, she cites concerns such as method-ological flaws in studies, safety considerations like the adverse events due to vaccination, and the relative lack of effectiveness of the vaccines.

She cited one study, reported in *JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association*, as an example of her concern. The study which was conducted by researchers at the Kaiser Permanente Clinical Research Unit in Colorado and funded by the CDC, looked at the medical records of over 45,000 children six months to 23 months old who had received the *trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine*, as well as other vaccines over the 12 year period, between 1991 and 2003.

The objective of the study was to analyze safety issues surrounding the use of the vaccine in children. After examining the children's medical records, researchers concluded that the influenza vaccine in children six to 23 months was associated with few medical problems, "none of which were serious" or "significantly associated with the vaccine."

The concern expressed by MS. Fisher was that the study didn't analyze effectiveness of the vaccine at all. The study design was a non-randomized, retrospective analysis, rather than a more rigorous, randomized, placebo-controlled trial. There were no unvaccinated controls.

Fisher is concerned that adverse events, due to the vaccine, slipped through the cracks. She notes that cases of convulsions and Guillain-Barre (*ghee-yan bah-ray*) syndrome were written off as coincidental, or attributed to other vaccines. Guillain-Barre syndrome is a rare autoimmune disorder characterized by a loss of reflexes and temporary paralysis, not to be taken lightly.

Fisher adds that nine of the 19 Kaiser Permanente and CDC study authors reported *financial ties* to influenza vaccine manufacturers, and all 19 received *CDC funding*. Although this does not necessarily mean that these authors of the CDC report were biased, it's certainly shows a potential conflict of interest that raises red flags.

The Cochrane Collaboration's analysis of flu vaccine studies **reached a very different conclusion**, pointing out the significant gap between public health policy and scientific evidence. Surprise was registered by them because there was only one study of inactivated flu vaccine in children under two years, especially given the recent U.S. recommendation for vaccination of **all** healthy children from six months to two years old. Can't be sure what it will do to them, but make them take it, anyway.

Moreover, in children under two, they found that the effectiveness of inactivated vaccine was similar to a placebo. It was impossible for them to carry out safety comparisons, because of the lack of rigorous, standardized,

randomized, placebo-controlled studies.

The Cochrane study further noted that the influenza vaccine did not fare much better with adults. In an analysis of flu shots in healthy people under 65, there was no evidence that the vaccines had an impact on measurable factors such as time off work, hospital stays or deaths resulting from the flu, complications from the flu. In the elderly, the results were so scattered that they were termed "both *counter-intuitive* and *implausible*." **Pretty strong language, wouldn't you agree?**

The Cochrane analysis certainly calls into question the efficacy of the flu shot program, as well as the rationale of the CDC's recommendations. Clearly more research is necessary to come up with good, solid answers about the safety (immediate and long-term), and the effectiveness of influenza vaccines.

They, along with many child health advocates, like Mark Stengler, ND, editor of Bottom Line Natural Healing newsletter, express concern that there are no long-term studies demonstrating efficacy, especially in regard to children, and they worry that side effects, such as neurological damage, have not been properly assessed.

Now, we have Controversial Findings About Flu Vaccines for the Elderly.

According to a review released to **Reuters**, on September 24, 2007, reported in **Medical News Today**, on September 25, 2007, and in the **Lancet Medical Journal**, on October 09 2007, "***A yearly flu vaccine has not been proven to prevent flu-related deaths in people over the age of 65.***"

Absolutely no studies have conclusively proven that flu shots prevent flu-related deaths among the elderly, according to their review, and some of the support for this practice is also based on flawed data. While some studies have shown a benefit for flu shots in younger adults, only a small number of trials included people over the age of 70 -- even though about **75 percent** of flu-related deaths occur among that particular age group.

There is also evidence, according to the researchers, that the flu vaccines are less effective in older people because the elderly have lower immune activity. Again, as this latest review has found -- flu shots are not even proven to reduce flu-related deaths in the elderly (one of the key groups for which they're recommended). One study estimated the number of elderly that received any benefit was somewhere around 13 percent.

In spite of all of this credible research, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC) recommends the flu shot for this purpose, citing research about the 36,000 yearly deaths and 200,000 annual hospitalizations for flu-related illness in the United States.

What, then, is the point?

The point, as it is with so many other drugs and vaccines, is to **pad the pockets** of the pharmaceutical companies who manufacture these worthless shots, and indirectly benefit the governmental agencies and personnel to whom they pay loads of money in the form of “lobbying” and “consulting fees.”

You may also be surprised to learn that nearly three years ago, a similar study published in the **Archives of Internal Medicine** found that flu shots prevent FAR FEWER deaths in the elderly than previously thought. That report highlighted that although immunization rates in the elderly (people over 65) increased 50 percent in the past 20 years, there hasn't been a consequent decline in flu-related deaths. This certainly begs the question, if this finding came out years ago, why has nothing been done in the meantime to change the recommendation?

And, though the current review provides excellent documentation as to the inadequacies of the flu vaccine, a very disconcerting statement was made by CDC flu expert Dr. Joe Bresee in that just-published Reuters article, mentioned earlier. There, he is quoted as saying that the CDC is considering other measures to tame the flu, including “**the widespread vaccination of schoolchildren.**” The purported rationale behind this is to stop the flu in children who “are a big part of community transmission.”

If you visit the **Recorded Interviews** link on this website, you will find a simulated interview entitled, **The Truth About Vaccines**, where the former vaccine researcher being interviewed reveals what he now thinks about vaccinations. Addressing the issue of the combined destructive power of a number of vaccines given to babies these days (*including the flu shots*), he calls it a **travesty and a crime**. He says there are no real studies of any depth which have been done on that.

The assumption is made that vaccines are safe, and therefore any number of vaccines given together are safe as well. But the truth is, **vaccines are not safe, to begin with!** Therefore the potential damage increases when you give many of them in a short time period.

According to Dr. Joseph Mercola, in one of his newsletters, **Nobody Really Needs a Flu Shot**. He notes that “Flu shots are loaded with neurotoxic substances like **mercury and aluminum.**” He finds it almost incomprehensible

that *thimerosal*, the well-documented, toxic preservative that also contains mercury, is still in most flu vaccines--years after federal agencies have mandated that it be removed.

Before you even consider getting yourself or your family vaccinated, he suggests you seriously evaluate the risks and side effects of the flu vaccine. In most people, the flu shot does not prevent illness, but actually does just the opposite--it weakens your immune system and makes you more predisposed to the illness.

Additionally, the significant number of deaths associated with the flu are outrageously exaggerated! In fact, one critic who was determined to expose the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and vaccine manufacturers, for falsely instilling fear in people, has found the truth behind the so-called "statistics."

According to the CDC's most recent death statistics located on their Web site, influenza and pneumonia killed 66,163 people in 2003. That means, in light of the current statistic, that just over half of those deaths resulted from the flu. **This, however, is far from being true.** Upon further investigation of the Web site, the actual number of deaths caused by the flu came to 273, with pneumonia accounting for the remaining **65,000 plus.**

Personally, I, nor my wife, have ever had flu shots, and we're a lot healthier for it. I had one short-lived bout with the flu about fifteen years ago, but I was symptom-free within five hours. Other than that, we've been fine.

My mother lived with us for eleven years, prior to her death in 2001 at the ripe old age of 89. She never had flu shots for all those years, and guess what? **she never had a cold, pneumonia, or the flu.** She was one of fifteen or so older ladies who met every Tuesday for all of those years for a Bible study, and all of the rest of them got their flu shots, faithfully. Guess what? Most of them came down with colds and the flu, and sometimes enough of them were sick at one time that they had to call off the Bible Study, but my Mom was never the cause.

Still, every year, they told her how urgent it was for old ladies, like her, to get their shots. She just smiled, and said she didn't need it, because her son kept her healthy. I don't think they ever really understood what that meant, but of course it meant that we kept her immune system in tip-top shape, and it took good care of her.

I don't recommend flu shots, and the reason is simple. For most people, flu

shots don't prevent illness. Many have been fooled into believing the only way to prevent death from the flu is to get a dose of the vaccine, however there are many natural ways to prevent the flu.

Here are a few I subscribe to, and that are recommended by Healthcare Professionals and researchers:

Avoid sugar: Sugar decreases the function of your immune system almost immediately, and as you probably know, a strong immune system is key to fighting off viruses and other illness, including the flu. It is especially imperative to avoid sugar if you feel you are coming down with something, but keeping sugar out of your diet for the long haul will do wonders for your health and make your body stronger, which will make it harder for the flu bug to bother you. Remember, sugar is present in foods you may not suspect, like ketchup and fruit juice.

Get plenty of sunshine, or take a quality, food-source, vitamin D. When there is available sunshine, get as much of your body exposed for 20-30 minutes a day, as you can. . . and no sunscreen, either.

In humans, Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) is converted from it's basic building block (cholesterol) when ultraviolet light hits Pro-Vitamin D (a squalene metabolite) in the cells of our skin. Vitamin D3 does not have significant biological activity, and must be metabolized, first by the liver and then by the kidneys into the converted, fully-active, hormonal form of Vitamin D (calcitriol). In terms of food source; fish liver oil, salmon, herring, sardines, liver, butter and eggs are the best source of Vitamin D. Realistically, it would be very difficult to eat enough food to get the amount of vitamin D your body needs, so you may want to use a D-3 supplement to assure adequate protection. That will also go a long way in strengthening your immune system.

Exercise: When you exercise, you increase your circulation and your blood flow throughout your body. This allows the components of your immune system to be better circulated. This means your immune system will be more efficient in weeding out and acting upon viruses and diseases, before it has a chance to spread.

Drink plenty of non-chlorinated, non-fluorinated water, and don't bathe or shower in water that hasn't been purified:

Poisoning yourself with cancer-causing chemicals does absolutely nothing to strengthen your immune system, quite the contrary, in fact.

Get adequate sleep: Try to get 7-8 hours of sleep each night. By not getting enough rest, you increase your chance of getting colds and flu, and extend your

recovery period.

Wash Your Hands, Regularly: Washing your hands will decrease your likelihood of spreading a virus to your nose, mouth, and ears, or to other people. If your immune system is strong, it should be able to fight off the virus if it does enter your body, but washing your hands provides a bit of extra protection. Wash them every time you come in from the outside, and also while you're out, if you have the opportunity, also every time you sneeze into your hand, or shake hands. This way, you avoid transmitting the virus from surfaces where infected persons have been.

Don't use anti-bacterial soap for this--antibacterial soaps are completely unnecessary, and they cause far more harm than good. Instead of antibacterial soap, identify a simple chemical-free soap that you can switch your family to. Local health food stores typically carry a variety of natural soaps. And always use warm to hot water for hand-washing, and lather for at least 20-30 seconds.

Get Enough Rest: Just as it becomes harder for you to get your daily tasks done if you're tired, it will be harder for your body, if it's overly-fatigued, to fight off the flu. Regular rest will keep you strong and ensure that your body has the strength to fight off any potential invaders.

Eat Garlic Regularly: Garlic is a triple-whammy: it's antibacterial, antiviral and anti-fungal. Some say that garlic is one food that should be eaten every day. It's important to note that the garlic must be fresh to give you optimal health benefits. Garlic pills are virtually worthless, so don't count on them to help a lot.

One problem with garlic, of course, is the smell, but generally a few cloves a day are tolerated by most people. If you develop a socially offensive odor, then all you need to do is slightly decrease the amount of garlic you're consuming until there is no odor present. Garlic is an herb, however, so if you don't like it or it makes you feel sick, your body is probably telling you that you should avoid it.

Well, do I have good news for you! **Alligin**, a super-supplement will save you all of the concerns expressed above. It's the heart of garlic, it's concentrated, but without the smell or any side effects, for that matter. To learn more about this awesome anti-microbial supplement, visit the **Nutritional Supplements** site on this website, and check out the article entitled, **Allicin, The Heart of Garlic**. An excellent CD is available upon request.

Don't Let Stress Become Overwhelming: We all face some stress everyday, but

if stress becomes overwhelming, then your body will be less able to fight off the flu and other illness. It has been estimated that **up to 90 percent of illness and disease is stress-related.**

Eat Healthy: Strive for regular, balanced, nutritious meals, with lots of fruit and vegetables. Stay away from white bread, white sugar, and processed meats as much as possible. They'll affect your health in an unhealthy way, sooner or later.

Finally, and I like this one . . . **avoid people and places** where you're bound to run into people who are coughing and sneezing and spitting up unhealthy phlegm, like the doctor's office, the Emergency Room, or the movie theater. Limit your exposure to begin with, and that will go a long way towards avoiding the problem.

I want to mention one other thing that you might be thinking about, the FluMist nasal vaccine. From what I have learned, there are a number of problems with it. It's unreliable, and it doesn't really help to avoid the flu. The side effects include cough, runny nose/nasal congestion, irritability, headaches, chills, muscle aches and fever, **and isn't that exactly what you're trying to avoid?**

If you do decide to get the nasal flu vaccine, you should be aware that you will be getting, not only a **live flu virus** in each dose, but also table sugar and MSG, which are fraught with their own problems. Plus, according to the [Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety \(GACVS\)](#), research has shown an increased risk of Bell's palsy following intra-nasal flu vaccination.

The makers of the nasal flu vaccine used in their study decided not to market it the following season, due to the risk. According to GACVS, the greater risk of Bell's palsy following immunization with this vaccine may have been due to specific vaccine components, or simply the use of the intra-nasal administration route. It certainly is possible that such complications may also apply to other nasal vaccines, although I have no studies to confirm that.

For my family, anyway, flu vaccine, whether in the shot or nasal form, has way too much uncertainty and risk involved, at best, and in my opinion, should be avoided.

The bottom line is to lead a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating right, appropriate, effective supplements, exercising, getting adequate sleep, and addressing the stressors in your life, year round. If you do even a few of these things, chances are you'll seldom have to worry about coming down with colds, pneumonia, or the flu.

If you do, taking **Alligin** and **Tiaga Immune Tea**, described extensively on the **Nutritional Supplements** section of this website, will go a long way towards making it all better, and keeping them away to begin with. Questions? Contact Lyle at ultrahealth@cs.com or call him at **800-829-9913**.