

THE VACCINE CONTROVERSY (Pt 2)

By Dr. Derek Conte

Our immune systems are evolved to protect us from illness and disease by detecting and destroying foreign particles before they can destroy us. Unending, microscopic wars are waged where our immune systems confront waves of invaders. If strong, our immune systems will win the wars for us but, if weak, will succumb to sickness or even death.

It works like this: illness-causing bugs, called pathogens – bacteria, viruses, parasites, pollen – have different DNA from ours which is reflected on the surface of their cells. Once these pathogens and their foreign DNA cross the boundary of our bodies, our immune systems are quickly awakened, sending antibodies, like sentries, to capture some of the enemy and bring them back to headquarters for interrogation and analysis. If an army we've never seen before catches us by surprise, we may lose the first battle and become sick. But during this time, a plan is drawn up for a strong retaliation and weapons specialized to destroy this particular enemy are designed. Our new army is then greatly amplified in number and sent throughout the body to crush the enemy completely, and does! The blueprints for this plan are kept safely locked away as memory cells, making any future threats from that enemy impossible – a lifelong immunity. This is one way the immune system gets stronger and why it is natural for us to get sick sometimes and recover. Children get sick more often than adults because their immune systems are inexperienced but quickly strengthen with time.

But throughout history there have been



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scourges that wiped out millions of people and livestock, motivating brilliant scientists like Louis Pasteur, to develop vaccines. It was discovered that if a very small amount of the same virus that caused so many deaths was deliberately introduced into the body, it could artificially induce the immune response described above, preventing large outbreaks of disease. But why, then, are vaccines so controversial today if the basis of their creation was so positive?

Here are some reasons a number of Americans are wary of vaccines:

A vaccine cannot provide lifelong immunity as in natural immunity.

Vaccines today contain not only viruses or bacteria but also preservatives and mercury 'stabilizers' that can be very toxic to adults and much more so to a child or infant.

Flu vaccines are only 'guesses' and some years are ineffective.

The recommended number of vaccines is constantly growing (now 69) and there are powerful financial incentives to continue this trend.

As always with serious issues, parents must avail themselves of the very best information possible before making health decisions for their children. There is no way around the need to become well-informed, so here are 3 websites: one pro-vaccine: cdc.gov one anti-vaccine: nvic.org and one (reportedly) neutral: immunizationinfo.org.

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