

Vaccines and Autism

exploring the relationship between
vaccines and autism, and the *controversy*
and confusion surrounding this link.

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Personal stories, memoirs, and vaccination studies all point to repeated incidences of vaccination injuries. Since the 1990s, there has been a growing group of individuals — physicians, parents, scientists, and activists that have pointed to vaccinations as a significant trigger of autism.

One of the first decisions that faced me as a new mother was whether or not to vaccinate my child. I hesitated because I had heard that vaccinations could trigger autism in some children. I didn't want to take that risk. However, finding truthful information on the subject proved to be challenging.

I turned to my friends, family, and my child's pediatrician for advice about whether to vaccinate. The information I received was contradictory. My doctor said, "Vaccinate, or else your child is at risk for numerous serious disease which may cause death." When I heard that, I was ready to vaccinate quickly and thoroughly. I didn't want my child to die. My instinct was to protect my child from harmful and deadly diseases. However, I knew that making a decision based on fear was not best way to make a decision.

Some family members urged me to be cautious about vaccinating my child, if not to forgo most or all of them

altogether. "Childhood illnesses help children to build their immune systems." "There are harmful substances in vaccines." Other family members could not even fathom that I was considering *not* vaccinating my children. They called me crazy and irresponsible. Friends and other mothers had a wide range of opinions that represented both sides of the issue.

It was very confusing. Especially for a new mother. With the lack of sleep, with the new responsibility of raising a child, with the consuming love I felt for this little baby, with the incredible life change that had taken place literally overnight—I was overwhelmed and I hardly felt able to make a wise decision on such an important issue.

Ultimately I wanted the experts to tell me what to do. I trusted my child's pediatrician—she was bright and likable. However, the sheer aggressiveness and intensity of the CDC'S (Center for Disease Control) recommended vaccination schedule

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A magazine article found in the databases