

## **VACCINE CONTRAINDICATION OR URBAN LEGEND?**

### **Have you heard these?**

Thieves who work shopping malls are robbing women in washrooms and leaving them naked!

Mountain Dew will shrink testicles and lower sperm count.

A passenger on a trans-Atlantic flight was stuck on a toilet seat for more than 2 hours due to a vacuum seal.

### **How about these?**

Breastfeeding women can't receive live vaccines.

No more than 1 vaccine can be given in the same limb.

Healthcare workers should not get nasal-spray vaccines.

### **Check it out! Don't miss opportunities to vaccinate because of rumors!**

Q: What vaccines can be given to breastfeeding women?

A: All vaccines can be given to breastfeeding women except smallpox (yes, even live vaccines, even nasal-spray vaccines!)

Q: Is it necessary to routinely test young women for pregnancy before administering vaccines?

A: No. However, females of childbearing age should be asked about the possibility of their being pregnant prior to being given any vaccine for which pregnancy is a contraindication or precaution and the answer documented in the medical record. If the patient is uncertain if she is pregnant, a test should be performed before administering live virus vaccines.

Q: Is it safe to give FluMist (H1N1 or seasonal) to a child or other household contact of a pregnant woman?

A: Yes, just not to the pregnant woman herself.

Q: What vaccines can be given at the same time?

A: All routine vaccines can be given in the same visit except the two live influenza nasal-spray vaccines.

(Merck recently recommended that Zostavax and Pneumovax not be given together; however, ACIP has not changed its recommendation on the simultaneous administration of these two vaccines.)

Q: How many vaccines can be given at the same visit?

A: No upper limit has been established regarding the number of vaccines that can be administered in one visit. ACIP and AAP consistently recommend administration of all indicated vaccines.

Q: How long do you have to wait between vaccines not given on the same day?

A: Inactivated vaccines can be given on the same day, any time before, or any time after other inactivated or live vaccines. The only issue is with two live vaccines--if not given on the same day, they need to be spaced at least 4 weeks apart.

Q: Do we have to take vital signs before giving vaccines?

A: No. ACIP does not recommend routinely checking temperature or vital signs before vaccination. Mild illness is not a reason to withhold vaccination and requiring extra steps can be a barrier to immunization.

Q: Should siblings of an immunosuppressed child be given MMR and varicella vaccines?

A: Yes. The only caution is if a vaccinee develops a rash after varicella vaccination. Then the vaccinee should avoid close contact with the immunosuppressed sibling until the rash resolves.

Q: Can we give MMR vaccine to a person with an egg allergy?

A: Yes. Influenza and yellow fever vaccines are now the only vaccines that are contraindicated for people who have a history of an anaphylactic allergy to eggs.

Q: Can a healthcare worker for whom live nasal-spray vaccines (LAIV) are contraindicated administer them?

A: Severely immunocompromised persons should not administer LAIV. However, others who cannot receive LAIV can administer it, including pregnant women, persons with asthma, and persons older than 50 years of age.

Q: Can individuals with a contact-type latex allergy get vaccines from vials that have natural rubber stoppers?

A: Vaccines that have been in contact with natural rubber are only contraindicated for persons who have had a severe, anaphylactic reaction to latex.

Q: Should a healthy patient receive zoster vaccine if they will be around a grandchild who is not yet immunized against varicella?

A: Yes. The only concern would be in the rare instance when a person develops a varicella-like rash after receiving zoster vaccine. Then the vaccinee should avoid close contact with the unvaccinated infant until the rash resolves.

### **Use the following resources to check for true contraindications and precautions, recommendations, and rules**

ACIP's General Recommendations on Immunization  
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5515.pdf>

CDC's "Pink Book"  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/pink-chapters.htm>

CDC's Guide to Contraindications and Precautions  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/vac-admin/downloads/contraindications-guide-508.pdf>

Guide to Contraindications and Precautions to Commonly Used Vaccines in Adults  
<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3072.pdf>

Guide to Contraindications and Precautions to Commonly Used Vaccines  
<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3072a.pdf>

CDC's Guidelines for Vaccinating Pregnant Women  
[http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/downloads/b\\_preg\\_guide.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/downloads/b_preg_guide.pdf)

CDC's Immunization & Pregnancy  
[http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/downloads/f\\_preg\\_chart.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/downloads/f_preg_chart.pdf)

Allergens in Vaccines  
<http://www.vaccinesafety.edu/components-Allergens.htm>

Summary of Recommendations for Childhood and Adolescent Immunization  
<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2010.pdf>

Summary of Recommendations for Adult Immunization  
<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2011.pdf>

Giving All the Doses (Immunization site maps for infants and children)  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/D/site-map.pdf>

Site map for adults: <http://www.eziz.org/PDF/IMM-718adult.pdf>

Ask the Experts  
<http://www.immunize.org/experts>

Write CDC immunization experts at [nipinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:nipinfo@cdc.gov)

Write IAC at [admin@immunize.org](mailto:admin@immunize.org)

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