

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

CDC's Immunization & Pregnancy
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

Write IAC at admin@immunize.org

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Teresa A. Anderson, DDS, MPH
Consultant, Immunization Action Coalition
1573 Selby Avenue • Saint Paul, MN 55104
tel: 651-647-9009 • fax: 651-647-9131
email: tanderson@immunize.org