Personal belief exemptions for vaccination put people at risk. Attempt the evidence for yourself.


Summary: A descriptive analysis of all cases of measles reported in the United States during 2001-2008.

Key findings: A total of 557 confirmed cases of measles and 38 outbreaks were reported during 2001-2008. Of these outbreaks, the 3 largest occurred primarily among personal信念 exemptions (children as persons who were vaccine eligible, according to recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the World Health Organization, but remained unvaccinated because of personal or parental beliefs). During 2004-2008, a total of 26% of reported measles cases were among unvaccinated U.S. residents, who were age eligible for vaccination but who claimed a personal belief exemption to state immunization requirements.

Link: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20929352


Summary: Researchers mapped vaccination-refusal rates by school and school district, analyzed measles-transmission patterns, and conducted discussions and surveys to examine beliefs of parents who decline vaccination for their children.

Key findings: An intentionally unvaccinated 7-year-old child who was unknowingly infected with measles returned from Switzerland, resulting in 11 additional measles cases in and around schools attended by more than 1,000 students. In San Diego, high personal belief exemption (PBE) rates were found in 10 schools (range, 4%-160%); schools and districts with high refusal rates were clustered geographically. Across all surveyed kindergartens, higher PBE rates correlated strongly with lower measles vaccination rates.

Link: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20308208


Summary: A case-control study of 156 physician-diagnosed cases of varicella among Kaiser Permanente Colorado members between 1998 and 2006. Of these cases, each case was matched with 4 randomly selected controls (n=595).

Key findings: Three of the five children with invasive Haemophilus disease had not been vaccinated. One of the children was too young to complete the primary series of Hb vaccine, and another child, who had completed the primary series, was found to have an immune disorder that impairs response to vaccination.

Link: www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/innovhtm/mm6731e1.htm


Summary: Researchers evaluated the geographic clustering of personal-belief exemptions in Michigan (1991-2004: 704,495 schools) and measured the geographic overlap between exemption clusters and clusters of reported pertussis cases (1993-2004: N=1,090 cases among people 13 years and younger).

Key findings: Researchers reported significant overlap between clusters of exemptions and clusters of pertussis cases. In addition, exemption rates appear to be increasing in Michigan, and nonmedical trends tend to be geographically clustered.

Link: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18922998


Summary: In 2008, during routine surveillance conducted by public health workers in Minnesota for invasive H. influenzae type b (Hib) disease, five children aged 5 months to 3 years were reported with invasive Hib disease; one child died.

Key findings: Three of the five children with invasive Hib disease had not been vaccinated. One of the children was too young to complete the primary series of Hib vaccine, and another child, who had completed the primary series, was found to have an immune disorder that impairs response to vaccination.

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