



VACCINES & AUTISM: IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS FROM A RECENT REPORT FROM THE INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

Information for Parents

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has released a new report on vaccines and autism. The IOM is a private, nonprofit organization that provides scientific advice to the government. The new report provides reassuring information for parents who are concerned about the following issues:

- Vaccines that contain thimerosal, a preservative that contains mercury
- The Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine

After reviewing the currently available information, the IOM concluded:

- **Neither vaccines containing thimerosal or MMR vaccine are associated with autism.**
- **The benefits of recommended childhood vaccines are proven. Thanks to vaccines, few children in the United States are harmed by measles, polio, tetanus, and other serious vaccine-preventable diseases.**
- **Autism is a very complex disorder—and much more research should be done to learn about its causes and to develop effective treatments.**

The IOM reached these conclusions after carefully reviewing a number of scientific studies. This included a study involving 467,450 children in Denmark, a study involving over 100,000 U.S. children, and a study involving about 100,000 children in the United Kingdom. The IOM also reviewed studies that reported findings of an association between thimerosal-containing vaccines, the MMR vaccine and autism.

The IOM committee consisted of leading authorities in a number of relevant fields including pediatrics, neurology, immunology, internal medicine, infectious diseases and genetics. The IOM committee members involved in this report had no financial ties to vaccine manufacturers.

Today, with the exception of some Influenza (flu) vaccines, none of the vaccines used in the U.S. to protect preschool children against 12 infectious diseases contain thimerosal as a preservative.

The IOM's complete report on Vaccine and Autism is available on the Internet at <http://books.nap.edu/catalog/10997.html>.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/nip, or call the CDC National Immunization Information Hotline (800) 232-2522 (English), (800) 232-0233 (Español), or (800) 243-7889 (TTY)