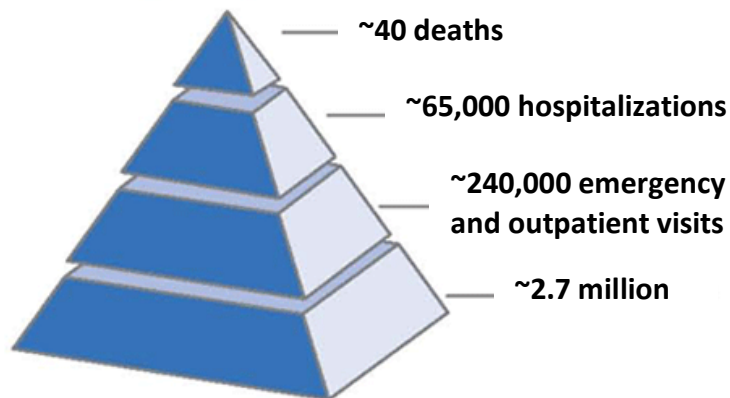


Rotavirus Vaccine



Estimated adverse events per year caused by RV infection in kids less than 5 years of age before the vaccine was introduced in the US.

Rotavirus Vaccine Benefits

Protects against infections caused by Rotavirus (RV). RV causes severe gastroenteritis, resulting in diarrhea and vomiting. It is very contagious. Without vaccination, nearly every child in the world is infected with RV before the age of five.

Saves lives: In the US, over 200,000 cases of RV hospitalizations have been prevented by vaccination from 2006 to 2010.

Concerns

Is the Rotavirus Vaccine safe?

The RV vaccine has been thoroughly studied for safety. A previous RV vaccine was removed from the market in 1999 because it was associated with an increased risk of intussusception (obstructed intestines). The newer vaccines are from a different source. A trial involving over 70,000 infants, found no difference in intussusception incidence in infants who had been vaccinated with the new RV vaccine and those that were not vaccinated. Ongoing surveillance through systems including the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System have not detected an increased risk as of 2014. As of 2012, 41 clinical trials, with over 186,000 participants, concluded that both available RV vaccines are safe and effective.

Are there any side effects?

Some recipients will experience mild vomiting (15%) and loose bowel movements (24%) within 40 days of vaccination. This is only slightly higher when compared to placebo (14 and 21%, respectively).

Can I wait to vaccinate my child?

Infection with RV most frequently occurs before the age of two. Children this young are also more vulnerable to life-threatening dehydration. Infants should be vaccinated at 2 months for maximum protection. After 15 weeks of age, the first dose of vaccine will be less effective at preventing RV illness.

Won't antibodies from breast milk protect my baby?

About half of mothers provide their newborns with RV protection through breastfeeding. However, this protection will last only a few months.

Can't I just treat this illness if it occurs?

There is no cure for Rotavirus infection. All that can be done is to treat the symptoms and to prevent severe dehydration. This is often done in a hospital setting. In addition, most preventive measures, like improving sanitation methods, do not significantly decrease the incidence of infection.

Where does it come from?

The Rotavirus vaccine is a disabled, live virus that was isolated from a calf. This virus cannot cause disease in humans, but will allow babies to develop immunity from the infectious forms of Rotavirus.

What chemicals does it contain?

It does not contain mercury, aluminum, or formaldehyde.

Wasn't this vaccine suspended?

In 2010, one form of the RV Vaccine was found to contain fragments from another virus. This virus does not cause disease in humans and there haven't been any reported adverse effects. The vaccine was reapproved two months later and currently does not contain any other virus particles.

Do any of these sources have ties to pharmaceutical companies?

The sources used for this handout are the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHoP) and articles from well-regarded medical journals. While some employees at these organizations have ties to pharmaceutical companies, they are upfront about these connections. The WHO reviews studies conducted all around the world, which are less likely to be connected to pharmaceutical companies. The CDC took steps in 2006 to make its vaccine recommendation unit more independent and less subject to bias.

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