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News Release

For Immediate Release

New Study: Vaccines Not Associated with Autism Risk

A new study published today in *Journal of Pediatrics* finds that exposure to vaccines is not associated with risk of autism. This study is the first of its kind to evaluate the issue of parental concerns over "too many vaccines too soon" and the development of autism.

The findings showed that the amount of antigens from vaccines received on one day of vaccination or in total during the first two years of life is not related to the development of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children. Antigens are substances in vaccines that cause the body's immune system to produce antibodies to fight disease.

Read the full [news release from the Journal of Pediatrics](#).

"This study is the first of its kind, but it bolsters similar studies examining potential links between vaccines and autism," said Pam Bryant, Maternal Child Health Programs Administrator with the Springfield Greene-County Health Department. "Those studies also found no compelling or scientific link between the two. This news should give parents further assurance that immunization is safe, and is the best way to protect a child from life-threatening diseases."

Bryant, MA, RN, CPHA, is available to media to discuss this study and childhood immunizations in general. To schedule an interview this afternoon or sometime next week, contact: Mike Brothers, (417) 874-1205.

Some further facts:

- Although scientific evidence shows that vaccines do not cause autism, a 2012 HealthStyles survey showed that just over 15% of parents are concerned that they do.
- Data from a 2012 survey found that 22.8% of parents are concerned that children receive too many vaccines at one doctor's visit, and 22.8% of parents are concerned that children receive too many vaccines by the age of 2.
- Nearly 1 in 10 parents refuse or delay vaccinations because they believe it is safer than following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) schedule.
- However, CDC research with parents regarding their vaccine attitudes and behaviors has found that the vast majority of U.S. parents believe vaccines are important, and they do vaccinate their children.
- Coverage for most of the routine childhood vaccines remain at or over 90% in children aged 19-35 months.
- Some parents are concerned that there is a link between vaccines (like MMR) or certain vaccine ingredients (like thimerosal) and autism. However, several large and reliable studies of MMR vaccine have been done in the U.S. and other countries. None has found a link between autism and the MMR vaccine.

- Scientific research does not show a link between thimerosal in vaccines and autism. Although thimerosal was taken out of childhood vaccines in 2001, autism rates have continued to go up.
- Even though current recommendations call for more vaccines than in years past, children are actually exposed to far less antigens than in the past because medical advances have made vaccines more precise. The maximum number of antigens that a child could be exposed to by 2 years of age in 2013 is 315, compared with several thousand in the late 1990s. Because different types of vaccines contain varying amounts of antigens, merely counting the number of shots received does not adequately account for how different vaccines and vaccine combinations stimulate the immune system.
- Ensuring vaccine safety is important for all vaccines. The United States currently has the safest, most effective vaccines in history. For more than 30 years, a vaccine safety system has been in place to ensure that vaccines are as safe as possible. As concern about vaccines amongst some in the public has risen, so has the amount of scientific study of them. CDC, along with other federal agencies, is committed to assuring the safety of vaccines through rigorous pre-licensure trials and post-licensure monitoring.