New Information Means Measles Is Even Worse Than We Thought

We know measles kills about 1 of every 500 people it infects. We know measles can cause a fatal condition called subacute sclerosing panencephalitis, or SSPE, years after the original infection. Now, we know something else about measles — it can wipe out a person’s immunity to infections other than measles.

In a new Science Made Easy video, Dr. Paul Offit, Director of the Vaccine Education Center, discusses the implications of this finding related to both measles disease and vaccination. Specifically, people infected with measles may be more susceptible to other infections because of the damage done to their immunologic memory. On the other hand, the vaccine does not have this effect on immunologic memory. This finding offers yet another reason to protect children against measles by vaccinating them.

Check out the new video today: vaccine.chop.edu/videos. (Select “Science Made Easy” and then “New Information Means Measles Is Even Worse Than We Thought.”)

Additional resources
For more information about measles and the MMR vaccine, check out these resources from the Vaccine Education Center:

• A Look at Each Vaccine: Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccines — Find information about measles, mumps and rubella disease and vaccination, including the relative risks and benefits of getting the MMR vaccine, at vaccine.chop.edu.

• Measles: What You Should Know Q&A sheet — Available in English, Spanish and Japanese, this downloadable PDF provides in-depth information about measles infection and the MMR vaccine and can be found in the resources section at vaccine.chop.edu/resources.

• Is the MMR Vaccine Safe? — In this short video, Dr. Offit addresses concerns about the safety of MMR vaccine. Check out our complete set of video offerings at vaccine.chop.edu/videos.

NEWS AND NOTES
New videos featuring Dr. Stanley Plotkin, inventor of the rubella vaccine
Talking about Vaccines with Dr. Stanley Plotkin is a new video series recently published by the Vaccine Education Center (VEC). In each one- to two-minute video, Dr. Plotkin answers a question about vaccine science.

• What is an adjuvant, and why are they used in vaccines?
• How can we still use a fetal cell line from the 1960s to make vaccines today?
• How is a vaccine processed by the body when it is given as a shot?
• What does it mean if a vaccine trial is double-blinded?
• How do clinical trials work?
• What does the FDA monitor during vaccine clinical trials?

You can see this and all of the VEC’s video offerings on this page of our website vaccine.chop.edu/videos.

Trivia Corner
What type of vaccine is the MMR vaccine?

a) Conjugate vaccine
b) Live, “weakened” viral vaccine
c) Toxoid vaccine
d) Inactivated viral vaccine

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Trivia Answer:
The correct answer is B. The MMR vaccine is a live, “weakened” viral vaccine that contains three vaccines (measles vaccine, mumps vaccine and rubella vaccine) combined into one shot. All three vaccines are made by weakening the viruses so that they do not replicate enough to cause disease, but still reproduce enough to provide protective immunity.

Go to vaccine.chop.edu/trivia to play Just the Vax, the Vaccine Education Center's trivia game, where you can find this question and others like it.

NEWS AND NOTES [cont.]

Book: No More Measles: The Truth About Vaccines and Your Health
Looking for a good general information book about vaccines? No More Measles: The Truth About Vaccines and Your Health, by Laurie Endicott Thomas, describes the role of vaccines in society as well as the reasons for the debate around them. Written for laypersons, the book describes biological and political aspects of vaccines, as well as offers information about individual diseases that can be prevented through vaccination.

The book is available from Amazon.

New app helps users sort facts from fiction
“Margarine is one molecule away from plastic; and shares 27 ingredients with paint. Bon Appetit!”

Do you think this statement is based on evidence?

With the vast amount of information that we are exposed to on any given day, it is easy to read something without stopping to think about its quality. A free new app offered by the News Literacy Project (NLP) aims to help with that. Called Informable, players can practice differentiating between good and bad information they find online. The app enables players to evaluate information in four categories: news or opinion, advertisement or other type of information, evidence or not, and fact or opinion.

The above example is from the “evidence or not” section, and the answer is “no” because although the statement might seem like a fact, the author does not provide evidence in the form of either chemical structures or ingredient lists.

Download Informable today from the App Store.

You can also find out more about how to assess online information, using criteria developed by the World Health Organization’s Vaccine Safety Net project, by downloading the website evaluation cards offered by the Vaccine Education Center. Visit the “Lessons” section of the vaccinemakers.org website.

VEC recognized as a credible source for vaccine information
Pinterest has recognized the Vaccine Education Center (VEC) as a trusted source for vaccine-related information. As such, when people use the platform to search for vaccine and disease information, search results from the VEC, along with other credible organizations, will be displayed. This includes information offered by the World Health Organization (WHO), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and Vaccine Safety Net (VSN).

Check out the VEC’s Pinterest boards at pinterest.com/VEC_CHOP.

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Send us your comments
If you have any comments about this newsletter or suggestions about how we can make our program more helpful, please send them to contactPACK@email.chop.edu.