

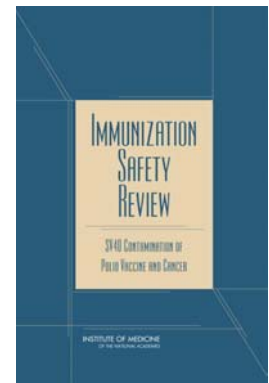
In Summary...

from the INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

Shaping the Future for Health

Immunization Safety Review: SV40 Contamination of Polio Vaccine and Cancer

At the request of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, the Institute of Medicine (IOM), an arm of the National Academies, evaluated whether or not contaminated polio vaccine may have caused cancer. In *Immunization Safety Review: SV40 Contamination of Polio Vaccine and Cancer*, the IOM committee carefully examines this hypothesized link and addresses other vaccine-safety issues.



Some of the polio vaccine administered from 1955-1963 was contaminated with a virus, called simian virus 40 (SV40). The virus came from the monkey kidney cell cultures used to produce the vaccine. Most, but not all, of the contamination was in the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV). Once the contamination was recognized, steps were taken to eliminate it from future vaccines. Researchers have long wondered about the effects of the contaminated vaccine on people who received it. Although SV40 has biological properties consistent with a cancer-causing virus, it has not been conclusively established whether it might have caused cancer in humans. Studies of groups of people who received polio vaccine during 1955-1963 provide evidence of no increased cancer risk.

However, because these epidemiologic studies are sufficiently flawed, the Institute of Medicine's Immunization Safety Review Committee concluded that the evidence was inadequate to conclude whether or not the contaminated polio vaccine caused cancer. In light of the biological evidence supporting the theory that SV40-contamination of polio vaccines could contribute to human cancers, the committee recommends continued public health attention in the form of policy analysis, communication, and targeted biological research.

Where can I get more information on this issue?

You should discuss with your doctor any concerns or questions you have regarding your child's vaccinations. You can learn more about the Immunization Safety Review Committee and read the full report titled *Immunization Safety Review: SV40 Contamination of Polio Vaccine and Cancer* at www.iom.edu/imsafety. From this website, you may also download copies of this summary. To contact the project staff, please email (imsafety@nas.edu) or phone us (202/334-1342).

Any adverse effects experienced by your child after a vaccination should be reported to your doctor. Additional reporting information can be found through:

Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System
1-800-922-7967
www.vaers.org/vaers.htm

National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program
1-800-338-2382
www.hrsa.gov/osp/vicp/qanda.htm

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Immunization Safety Review: SV40 Contamination of Polio Vaccine and Cancer is available for sale from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Box 285, Washington, DC 20055; call (800) 624-6242 or (202) 334-3313 (in the Washington metropolitan area), or visit the NAP's online bookstore at www.nap.edu.

The Institute of Medicine is a private, nonprofit organization that provides health policy advice under a congressional charter granted to the National Academy of Sciences. For more information about the Institute of Medicine, visit the IOM home page at www.iom.edu.

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