

SAMPLE LITERATURE SEARCH

(continued from previous page)

In 1986, the National Childhood Vaccine Act (NCVIA) was instituted and stipulates that victims must first file a claim in the federal Vaccine Court. The statute of limitations for this is within three years of “the first symptom or manifestation of onset or of the significant aggravation of an injury.”

July 1, 1999, the FDA sent out a letter to vaccine manufacturers requesting they submit how they plan to reduce or eliminate thimerosal in vaccines.

July 7, 1999, a joint statement was issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics and U.S. Public Health Service to alert clinicians and the public about thimerosal. Though they state all children should continue to be immunized, they agree thimerosal in vaccines should be reduced or eliminated.

In 2000 the FDA ordered removal of thimerosal as soon as possible but remaining bottles of vaccines with thimerosal were allowed to be used up, including the Hepatitis B vaccine given to newborns.

In 2001, most thimerosal had been removed from vaccines including Hepatitis B.

Mercury Toxicity

Mercury is a neurotoxin and with toxic levels can harm the brain, heart, kidneys and lungs causing immune, sensory, neurological, motor and behavioral dysfunctions. Infants have been found to be more susceptible than adults. The severity of toxicity to an individual is determined by dose, age, body weight, duration of exposure, route of exposure and the health of the person involved. Organic forms are less readily eliminated from the body than inorganic forms. There are not guidelines regarding exposure specifically for ethylmercury but the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] developed guidelines for methylmercury which have been utilized, including by the FDA, for ethylmercury as well. The EPA guideline states “U.S. EPA’s 2001 Reference Dose (RfD) for methylmercury was calculated to protect the developing nervous system. Currently, U.S. EPA uses an RfD of 0.1 mcg/kg body weight/day as an exposure without recognized adverse effects.”

The original thimerosal manufacturer, Eli Lilly and Company, had a Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for thimerosal dated June 13, 1991. Under Section 5 – Health Hazard Information, it lists the possible human effects “including signs and symptoms of exposure: Topical allergic dermatitis has been reported. Thimerosal contains mercury. Mercury poisoning can occur and topical hypersensitivity reactions may be seen. Early signs of mercury poisoning in adults are nervous system effects, including narrowing of the visual fields and numbness in the extremities. Exposure to mercury in utero and in children can cause mild to severe mental retardation and mild to severe motor coordination impairment.” It also lists a California Proposition 65 Warning: “Warning: This product contains a chemical known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm.” In 1991, Eli Lilly and Company stopped the sale and manufacture of thimerosal.

A big factor in mercury toxicity in children is their ability, or lack of it, to eliminate mercury from their system. When “the rate of mercury exposure exceeds the rate of mercury elimination”, then toxicity can lead to damage. Studies have shown ethylmercury to eliminate itself much faster than methylmercury. But because infants are not fully developed, they are not able to excrete mercury efficiently. The main reason is because they are unable to produce bile well which is the main excretion route for organic mercury.

This is thought to be a strong factor in the relationship between vaccines and the development of autism in children. There are also other theories as to why the detoxification and excretion processes are impaired in children with autism. These include exposure to toxins before birth and during infancy, antibiotics, and the child’s health during the time of exposure to mercury.

An unpublished thimerosal study, February 29, 2000, by Dr. Tom Verstraeten, an epidemiologist, performed this study for the CDC, and is clearly marked “confidential, do not copy or release”. But despite the CDC’s attempt to keep this secret, it was obtained by SafeMinds through the Freedom of Information Act. The report states, “As for the exposure evaluated at 3 months of age, we found increasing risks of neurologic developmental disorders with increasing cumulative exposure to thimerosal. Within the group of developmental disorders, similar, though not statistically significant, increases were seen for the sub-group called specific delays and within this sub-group for the specific disorder developmental speech disorder, and for autism, stuttering and attention deficit disorder.” At a meeting assembled at the CDC in June of 2000, Dr. Verstraeten told federal Officials and industry representatives about studies showing a link between thimerosal and speech delays, attention-deficit