

A Safe Shot Strategy for Parents Who Choose to Vaccinate

BY LAUREN FEDER, M.D.

From the Hippocratic oath of “First do no harm” to the homeopathic aphorism, “The physician’s highest and *only* calling is to make the sick healthy, to cure, as it is called,” every practitioner’s mission is to provide quality care to patients, and do no harm. The idea that vaccination, which is hailed as one of the greatest successes in public health, could be dangerous is an outrageous notion to most physicians. With more people recognizing that there can be side effects following a shot, parents are interested in taking measures to prevent if not minimize any health problems.

If you decide to vaccinate, make sure your child is in good health. If your child is sick or has been recently (in the past two weeks), I encourage the “wait until better” approach. If your child is cranky, fussy or not herself, this may mean that he could be getting sick: wait until he is better. If your child has been on antibiotics, wait at least six weeks until getting a shot. Antibiotics weaken the immune system and it is not uncommon that children become sick soon after. Wait until better.

For children who have chronic conditions such as allergies, eczema or recurrent ear infections, the timing of vaccination becomes more complex. Unfortunately, so many children live with chronic problems now that we also need to consider the possibility that the condition has been caused by or connected to previous shots. I believe it is best to treat these underlying conditions preferably with natural holistic medicine before vaccinating again.



Many parents bring their children to see me for a homeopathic medicine to help strengthen their child’s constitution prior to getting a shot in the hope that this could decrease the chance that the vaccine could aggravate the preexisting condition.

If you vaccinate your child, I would recommend using a *safe shot strategy* to both educate yourself and to help prevent if not minimize any possible adverse effects following a shot.

The Safe Shot Strategy is outlined in four steps.

1. Be familiar with the disease.

Answer the following questions:

- What is the disease?
- Are there any complications?
- How is it treated?
- How common is it in the area that I live? In my country?
- What is the risk of your child contracting the disease?

2. Be informed about the vaccine:

- What are the benefits of the shot?
- What are the risks?

3. What is the standard vaccine schedule?

- Know which shots will be coming up at your next doctor visit.

4. Is this the right time to give the shot?

- If your child is ill, delay the shot until better.
- If your child has chronic conditions that might affect his or her immune response, talk to your practitioner before the vaccination.
- If your child has recently taken antibiotics, steroids or other strong medications that weaken the immune system, wait several weeks until he or she has stabilized.

- d. Check your child's health before and after the shot. Contact your physician if your child shows signs of agitation, discomfort, or serious illness.

Natural treatment before and after the shot

Because it is important that children be healthy at the time of the shots, I prefer extra strengthening for the immune system prior to and following vaccination. Most pediatricians will recommend you give your child such medications as acetaminophen, to reduce any fever or body ache. In general, many parents in my office practice prefer not to begin with standard medications as these can mask or suppress symptoms, which can make it difficult to determine if there is any reaction, and consequently also make it harder to find a proper homeopathic medicine.

Before any vaccination, I recommend administering the following suggested list of remedies seven days prior to and after the shot for general strengthening of the body. These may also reduce possible side effects following the vaccine: At our office, we offer separated, thimerosal-free shots, and provide parents with information on the following regime, which can be used in mixed variations.

- Black Currant (A gemmotherapy herbal preparation for general strengthening) can be alternated days with Briar Rose
- Briar Rose (gemmotherapy herbal preparation for children's ailments and immune strengthening. And/or
- Vitamin C (less than 2 years of age: 100 mg two times daily – over 2 years old, 250 mg. two time a day)
- Natural general immune strengthener for children

In our office, we prescribe the following homeopathic medicines on the day of the shot:

- Ledum palustre 30C for puncture wounds following a shot - 3 pellets one hour before the shot, and two doses after the shot (every 12 hours)
- Thuja occidentalis 30C, a general medicine for vaccine effects - 3 pellets twice a day for 3 days following the shot
- Chamomilla 30C - 3 pellets if needed for fussiness following shot
- Arnica montana 30C, for local swelling and soreness - 3 pellets twice a day for 2 days following the shot ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Lauren Feder is a member of Inspired Parenting's Advisory Panel. For more information about her work, books and website, see page 61.

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