Vaccination is a medical intervention performed on a healthy person to theoretically prevent infectious disease that could harm that person or be communicated to someone else and cause harm. Many people experience infectious diseases, such as chicken pox and mumps, and do not develop complications that cause permanent health problems or death. Others do.

Unlike recovery from infectious diseases, which often provides lifelong immunity, vaccination does not give lifelong immunity. For some people, vaccination does not work at all and fails to provide even temporary immunity.
All pharmaceutical products, including vaccines, carry a risk of harm. Just as individuals can react differently to prescription drugs, some people are at greater risk than others for adverse responses to vaccination that can lead to chronic illness and disability or even death.

In 1986, Congress acknowledged the reality of vaccine injuries and deaths when it passed the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act. By 2007, nearly $2 billion had been awarded to vaccine casualties by the U.S. Court of Claims—even though federal officials continue to fight every claim and two out of three vaccine victims are turned away for compensation.

In 1991 and 1994, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) published reports reviewing the medical literature for evidence that vaccines can injure and kill. IOM confirmed that vaccines can cause damage to the immune system and brain, as well as death, and admitted there are “many gaps and limitations in knowledge bearing directly or indirectly on the safety of vaccines.” These include “inadequate understanding of the biologic mechanisms underlying adverse events following natural infection or immunization...”

Since the early 1980s, every new vaccine developed by drug companies for children has been recommended by U.S. federal health officials for universal use by all children in America. Today, Americans are required to buy and use more vaccines than citizens in any other nation in the world.

In 1982, pediatricians were giving children 23 doses of 7 vaccines, including vaccines for measles, mumps and rubella. By 2007, the numbers of doses of vaccines the federal government recommended for universal use by age 12 years had more than doubled to 56 doses of 16 vaccines: diphtheria (6 doses), pertussis (6 doses), tetanus (6 doses), polio (4 doses), measles (2 doses), mumps (2 doses), rubella (2 doses), HIB (4 doses), hepatitis B (3 doses), chicken pox (2 doses), hepatitis A (2 doses), pneumococcal (4 doses), rotavirus (3 doses), influenza (5 doses), meningococcal (1 dose), and HPV (3—for girls).

More than twice as many American children are suffering with chronic brain and immune system dysfunction today than there were in the 1970s and 80s, when half as many vaccines were given to them. Today, 1 child in 450 in America becomes diabetic; 1 in 150 develops autism; 1 in 9 suffers with asthma; 1 in 6 is learning disabled.
Dozens of new vaccines are being developed by the pharmaceutical industry and tested in more than 1,800 human clinical trials worldwide to prevent everything from herpes and syphilis to nicotine and cocaine addiction. Americans today are facing an increasingly well-financed and highly structured mandatory mass vaccination system that attaches societal sanctions and legal punishments for failure to use multiple doses of multiple vaccines.

The legal right of states to require citizens to be vaccinated for smallpox was confirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1905. Since then, vaccine laws in most states have provided individuals with exemptions to vaccine mandates for medical, religious, and philosophical or conscientious belief reasons. Requirements for obtaining these exemptions are worded differently in each state.

All but two states (Mississippi and West Virginia) allow religious exemption, although the language about which beliefs qualify for a religious exemption varies among states. Seventeen states provide for a philosophical, personal belief or conscientious belief exemption. These states come closest to protecting the right of Americans to exercise informed consent to vaccination.

However, both the religious and the conscientious/philosophical belief exemptions are threatened by forced vaccination proponents who argue that these exemptions provide “loopholes” in vaccine laws that allow too many people to avoid vaccination. They contend that if many people opt-out of vaccination, it could lead to future epidemics of infectious disease.

On November 17, 2007, government officials in the State of Maryland ordered several thousand parents to line up at a county courthouse with their children to get them injected with two newly mandated vaccines for hepatitis and chickenpox or else face jail time and stiff fines. There was no public health emergency. No bioterrorism attack. No raging epidemic of deadly disease.

No questions were asked about previous vaccine reactions or health risks before the children were vaccinated on the spot. Armed guards with dogs made sure nobody from the public, including the media, were allowed inside the courthouse to see what was happening. It was the first time Americans witnessed fellow citizens being rounded up and threatened with imprisonment for simply failing to show government officials proof of vaccination. It will not be the last time unless citizens in every state stand up and fight for their right to make informed,
voluntary vaccination decisions for themselves and their children.

With the understanding that medical science and the doctors who practice it are not infallible and what doctors believe is true today can be proven wrong tomorrow, better educated health care consumers are now demanding more information, more choices, and a more equal decision-making partnership with doctors. They are asking questions rather than trusting blindly. One of the biggest questions yet to be answered by doctors and public health officials is: Why are so many highly vaccinated children so sick?

As millions of Americans instinctively turn away from the pharmaceutical-dependent medical model and embrace a more vitalistic approach to health and wellness that acknowledges individuality and the oneness of body, mind, and spirit, many are rejecting one-size-fits-all forced vaccination policies. They are coming to the realization that one way to better health is to summon the courage to reject belief systems based on fear and work in harmony with the natural order.

The National Vaccine Information Center has defended the ethical principle of informed consent since 1982. We maintain that the right to make informed, voluntary decisions about any medical intervention that can harm you or your child is a human right. Go to www.nvic.org to learn more about how you can prevent vaccine reactions and protect vaccine choices in America. Support the work of the National Vaccine Information Center and educate your community about the need to secure informed consent protections in vaccine laws in your state and every state.

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Defending Informed Consent to Vaccination in America

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