Maltese Paediatric Association

It-Tilqima tal-MMR u l-Awtiżmu

Stqarrija għall-Istampa

L-Assoċjazzjoni Maltija tal-Pedjatrija tinnota li ħafna ġenituri huma inkwetati dwar l-MMR minħabba xi sentenzi legali fl-Italja u l-Amerika li allegaw li t-tilqima kienet il-kawża tal-awtiżmu f'xi tfal. Dawn is-sentenzi ma kienux ibbażati fuq evidenza xjentifika.

L-allegazzjoni falza li l-MMR tista' twassal għall-awtiżmu bdiet meta Dr Andrew Wakefield, li m'għadux aktar tabib, ippubblika riċerka fl-1998 fuq 12-il tifel u tifla. Din ir-riċerka kienet żbaljata etikament u fil-mod kif sar l-istudju. Is-sejbiet tiegħu intwerew li kienu żbaljati minn riċerkaturi oħra li wettqu diversi studji serji fuq mijiet ta' eluf ta' tfal u li fihom ma nstabet ebda rabta bejn l-MMR u l-awtiżmu. Minħabba l-allegazzjonijiet frodulenti l-istudju kien maqtugħ mill-ġurnal mediku li fih kien ippubblikat waqt li Wakefield tneħħietlu wkoll il-warrant biex jipprattika ta' tabib.

Il-ħożba, il-gattone u l-ħożba ġermaniża huma lkoll infezzjonijiet potenzjalment serji. Il-ħożba tista' twassal għall-mewt jew infezzjoni fil-moħħ, b'konsegwenzi serji ta' diżabilità mentali. Il-gattone tista' twassal għall-meninġite u telf ta' smigħ permanenti. Jekk mara taqbadha r-rubella waqt it-tqala, it-tarbija tista' titwieled b'difetti serji fil-moħħ, nuqqas ta' smigħ u għamja. It-tilqima tal-MMR tipproteġi lit-tfal minn dawn il-mardiet kollha.

L-awtiżmu hi kundizzjoni fl-iżvilupp fit-tfal. Dawn it-tfal isibu diffikultà fl-imġieba soċjali, komunikazzjoni u xi aspetti oħra tal-imġieba tagħhom. Sikwit l-awtiżmu huwa identifikat l-ewwel darba fit-tfal żgħar fit-tieni sena tal-ħajja. Peress li l-ewwel tilqima tal-MMR ukoll tingħata fil-bidu tat-tieni sena, xi ġenituri bi żball jassumu li t-tilqima kienet il-kawża. Hemm biżżejjed evidenza xjentifika li turi li l-MMR ma tikkawżax l-awtiżmu. Ir-riċerka turi li problemi ġenetiċi għandhom rwol ewlieni fil-kawża tal-awtiżmu.

It-tfal jixraqilhom jkunu protetti kontra infezzjonijiet serji. Minħabba l-istudju falz ta' Dr Wakefield fl-1998, ħafna tfal baqgħu ma tlaqqmux. Dan wassal għal outbreaks ta' ħożba fl-Ewropa li ħalliet xi tfal mejtin u oħrajn bi brain damage. Dawn l-outbreaks għadhom sejrin u jistgħu jitwaqqfu biss permezz tat-tilqima tal-MMR. Sa issa ma kellniex tfal bil-ħożba f'Malta grazzi għall-programm eċċellenti tat-tilqim bl-MMR. Madankollu jekk ma tlaqqamx lit-tfal tiegħek, tkun qed tesponi lilhom u tfal oħrajn għall-infezzjoni tal-ħożba.

L-Assoċjazzjoni Maltija tal-Pedjatrija tixtieq tenfasizza li għandna evidenza qawwija li turi li m'hemm assolutament ebda rabta bejn l-MMR u l-awtiżmu. It-tilqima tal-MMR tipproteġi lit-tfal minn infezzjonijiet serji. Tħallix 'l uliedek f'riskju.

Prof Thomas Attard
President
4 ta' Settembru 2013

Dr Juanita Debattista
Segretarja
4 ta' Settembru 2013

Maltese Paediatric Association

MMR Vaccine and Autism

Press Release

The Maltese Paediatric Association notes that many parents are anxious about the MMR vaccine because of the recently published legal verdicts in Italy and the US claiming that this vaccine was the cause of autism in some children. These rulings were not based on any scientific evidence.

The fraudulent claim that MMR vaccination possibly caused autism started when Dr Andrew Wakefield, who is now no longer a doctor, published methodologically and ethically flawed research back in 1998 after studying only twelve children. His findings were invalidated by other researchers performing properly designed scientific studies in hundreds of thousands of children that showed that there was absolutely no link between MMR and autism. Because of his fraudulent allegations Dr Wakefield’s paper has been withdrawn from the scientific literature and his warrant to practice as a doctor has been revoked.

Measles, mumps and rubella are all potentially serious infections. Measles may lead to death or brain infection with serious mental and neurological disabilities. Mumps may be complicated by meningitis and permanent hearing loss. If acquired by a pregnant woman, rubella may cause severe brain damage, deafness and blindness in the unborn child. The MMR vaccine protects children against all these serious illnesses.

Autism is a chronic developmental disorder characterised by difficulties in social interaction, communication, and restrictive and repetitive behaviour. Autism is often first identified in toddlers in the second year of life. The first dose of the MMR vaccine also happens to be given in the second year. This timing leads some parents to mistakenly assume that the vaccine causes autism. There is enough scientific evidence to show that the MMR vaccine does NOT cause autism, on the contrary recent research is showing that genetic problems play a very important role in the causation of autism.

Children deserve to be protected against preventable serious infections. Because of the falsified results published by Dr Wakefield in 1998, many children were left unvaccinated. This led to current outbreaks of childhood measles within Europe which left some children dead or severely brain damaged. These outbreaks are still ongoing and can only be stopped by protecting children with the MMR vaccine. As yet there are no outbreaks in Malta because of an excellent MMR vaccination programme, however, leaving your child unvaccinated may lead to measles infection not only in your child but also in lots of other innocent children left unvaccinated.

The Maltese Paediatric Association would like to emphasise that there is overwhelming evidence showing that there is absolutely no link between the MMR vaccine and autism. The MMR vaccine protects children against serious infections. Do not leave your child at risk.

Prof Thomas Attard
President
4th September 2013

Dr Juanita Debattista
Secretary
4th September 2013