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**Vaccines: Reducing Doctor Visits**

**By News Canada**

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(NC)–While vaccines are a proven, safe and effective way to prevent certain life-threatening diseases, myths abound about vaccinations and the risks that they pose to human health. This is a sobering thought when you consider at least two million children die each year from diseases that are vaccine-preventable.

Immunization has led to great advances in eradicating common childhood illnesses. Without it, infants and children would still suffer from diseases such as measles, mumps, tetanus, polio and pertussis (whooping cough). Millions of children in Canada have escaped infection from these serious and sometimes deadly diseases because of the success of immunization programs over the years.

The benefits of vaccinations spill over even to those children who have not been vaccinated – this effect is referred to as

herd immunity and means that even children who have not received the vaccination receive some protection once the majority of children have been vaccinated. This occurs because vaccinated children resist infection and decrease the chances of those who are unprotected from ever being exposed to the disease.

**Myths and Facts about Vaccines**

**M: Children get diseases from vaccinations**

**F: Vaccines protect children from disease. They stimulate the body's natural immune system to recognize disease and respond with prepared antibodies to combat it.**

**M: Vaccines cause harmful and permanent side effects**

## Vaccines: Reducing Doctor Visits

F: Vaccines are carefully tested to ensure safety. When side effects occur they are usually minor.

M: Vaccines aren't effective

F: The majority of people (over 95%) who are vaccinated against a disease develop immunity to it. No medical advance is 100% effective.

M: Diseases that we vaccinate against don't exist anymore

F: Immunization programs have drastically reduced the number of cases of disease, but they do still exist. Immunizing your child is the only way to be almost certain they won't get sick from those diseases

Disease prevention with vaccination is the best way to keep your child healthy. Waiting until your child

is infected is very risky. Traditionally, treatment based on antibiotics often works too slowly to avoid the damaging effects of a disease and harmful bacteria can also develop resistance to antibiotic treatment.

Vaccine research continues to develop with advances in biotechnology leading to increased efficacy and safety. These new developments are particularly important for children and infants whose immune systems are still developing and are at highest risk. The benefits and minimal risks associated with immunization far outweigh the disease and death that would occur without it.

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### **Vaccine Awareness Month**

**By Michelle Cannon**

## Vaccine Awareness Month

August is Vaccine Awareness month. And could it be a more perfect month for it? Everyone's getting ready for school. Parents of young children are headed off to doctor offices; clinics and mobile clinics in a mad rush to do yet another thing to get their little ones ready for school.

Whether to vaccinate is a very hot topic in many countries. Everyone needs to be aware of the facts when making a decision to vaccinate or not to vaccinate. These are your children. They deserve to have their medical care in the hands of well-informed parents. So inform yourself. Get the facts. So where do you start?

First and foremost with all things medical: Consider the source. When gathering facts about health, you must always follow the dollar. Is the information you're receiving coming from a doctor? That doctor receives money for selling those vaccines you know. The pharmaceutical companies give him little "perks" and "benefits" for pushing their product. So please, don't let that be one of your main sources. Always follow the almighty dollar!

So where do we receive unbiased information about vaccines? Some very good non-profit sources are:  
: The National Vaccine Information Center

ThinkTwice Global Vaccine Institute

## Vaccine Truth

Try also just typing in a search "truth about vaccines" or "vaccine dangers" or "vaccine risks" .. and if your stomach can take it.. try "vaccine ingredients". Look up information on vaccines and mercury; vaccines and autism; vaccines and SIDS. (Did you know that when Japan changed their vaccination policy from beginning at 3 months to starting at 2 years of age, that the SIDS rate dropped by something like 87% that very year? Definitely a scary number. And worse they were avoidable deaths if we only were aware.) So be aware!

There is a wealth of information at your fingertips. All you must do to find it is look. There is no excuse for allowing our children to have medical "care" based on ignorance. We are the parents. We have been given the responsibility to see that our children are healthy and happy. We have the information to meet that responsibility. So if we are to celebrate Vaccine Awareness Month--let's become AWARE!

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Michelle Cannon, single mom to 5, former daycare owner who taught parenting classes for 6 years, currently operates a primal mothering educational forum, local support/playgroup, and newsletter/blog. She owns a natural cleaning service and an online health store located at

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