



THIMEROSAL IN U.S. VACCINES

Vaccines are held to the highest standard of safety. The United States currently has the safest, most effective vaccine supply in history. Years of testing are required by law before a vaccine can be licensed. Once in use, vaccines are continually monitored for safety and effectiveness.

What is THIMEROSAL?

Thimerosal is a very effective preservative that has been used since the 1930s to prevent contamination in some multi-dose vials of vaccines. Thimerosal contains some mercury. There is no convincing evidence of harm caused by the low doses of thimerosal in vaccines, except for minor reactions like redness and swelling at the injection site.

Is Thimerosal harmful?

To date, there is no conclusive evidence that any vaccine or vaccine additive increases the risk of developing autism or any other behavior disorder. Rather, evidence is accumulating of lack of any harm resulting from exposure to vaccine containing thimerosal as a preservative. In a 2004 report, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) concluded that there is no association between autism and vaccines that contain thimerosal as a preservative.

For more information, call the Delaware Division of Public Health Immunization Program at 1-800-282-8672.