

Email Thread – Pregnant Women Being Reported to Social Services for Refusing the Flu Jab

Learnt last week - I was told by a midwife (and others present agreed)that Mothers in Calderdale are being reported to social services if they refuse the flu jab. The evidence versus risks made this unfair in the first place - why should they take a risk to their body under this threat. but the fact that mothers are being reported to social services for refusing a jab that does not work is appalling.

Ruth Weston

To be fair, this emanates from the most recent maternal death enquiry which found that one in eleven women who died, died of flu. But referring to SS is vastly over the top, women should make up their own mind as with any other treatment. This year's vaccine didn't prevent flu but future vaccines may.

Bigger argument, do women have a duty of care to their children to stay alive to bring them up?

I leave this open, having lost my own mother to polio at the age of 18 months, I wish the vaccine had been available in those days, and that she had had it ,but then AFAIK there has never been a problem with the polio vaccine for those who have had it (though the live vaccine has infected other family members, the last death in England was an uncle of a vaccinated infant I think.)

(I didn't allow my children the whooping cough vaccine and my youngest MMR as a baby,)

Margaret

You can 'prove' anything with statistics.

There are approximately 800,000 births in the UK each year

Maternal deaths are 12 per 100,000.

So very sadly 48 women die.

Of these, 2/3 had a pre-existing medical condition.

So 16 healthy women died

Of these 1/11 died of flu

So 1.45 deaths of healthy women were attributable to flu – in 800,000 births.

I'm a bit busy at the moment to work out the % (should have saved it last time I did it), but if someone else would like to do it, it's tiny.

What are the statistics of women who suffered an adverse reaction to the flu vaccination?

How severe?

What potentially dangerous substances are there in the vaccine?

In the carrier?

How many pregnant women die in a car crash?

Etc, etc, etc.

Katharine Graves

Dear Katharine,

May I adjust your figures please. Working with the 800,000 births and the figure of 12 maternal deaths per 100,000...this would make 12×8 , which is 96 maternal deaths.

However, new figures for maternal deaths show a decrease to 10 per 100,000 in the UK, so this is 10×8 , which is 80 maternal deaths.

You say that $\frac{2}{3}$ had co-morbidities, giving a rounded up figure of 27 deaths of healthy women...(though the report actually says $\frac{3}{4}$, making the figures even smaller – 20 deaths of healthy women).

Of these $\frac{1}{11}$ died with flu...adjusting your figure from 1.45 to 2.45...(but with the $\frac{3}{4}$ figure, closer to 2)

This is roughly 0.0003% or 3 in one million healthy women at risk...(and with the $\frac{3}{4}$ figure, exactly 0.00025% – or 2.5 in one million)

We do not know whether these women had been vaccinated against flu or not. I have read that it is possible that being vaccinated against the wrong strain of flu makes you more vulnerable should you catch the actual strain.

I have read that 2 in a million people experience anaphylactic shock after flu vaccination but, apparently, care providers are ready for this and there were no recorded deaths. The evidence of harm from flu vaccination is low according to Cochrane, but not absent.

Cochrane say that the need to treat figure for flu vaccination is 71. That is, 71 people need to be vaccinated to avoid one case of flu. This means that even if the women who died had not been vaccinated, vaccination would not have reduced the incidence of flu in that group of women by very much at all. Taking all the flu associated deaths in one year (including the women who were already poorly - rounded to 11) you would need to vaccinate every pregnant woman over a period of 6 and a half years to avoid one maternal death...that is, you would reach 71 flu-associated maternal deaths after 6 and half years and, statistically, only one of these women might have avoided the flu by being vaccinated. Cochrane says there is no evidence that vaccination reduces the severity of the illness.

We also don't know whether the women who died received antipyretics (paracetamol etc). Animal research shows significantly increased mortality in mice infected with flu. It could be that the cause of death was caused by the treatment rather than the illness itself. Perhaps pregnant women with flu are more likely to suffer in this way as their immunity is already altered and then compromised further by interfering with the body's natural attempt to combat infection.

Of course, it would be hugely important to save the life of even one mother every 6 and half years, but, with such tiny figures, it is very likely that vaccination is causing an equal and possibly hidden harm...and very probable that the expense of the flu vaccination programme would save more lives if redirected to another area of care.

Alex
