

Overview

> Children are at an extremely low risk from COVID-19, with not a single death of a previously healthy child.(3)

> Children are less likely than adults to transmit the virus.(4)

> All available vaccines against COVID-19 are still in trial phase. (1,2)

> All vaccines currently available against COVID-19 have caused some form of adverse reactions, including permanent injuries and death.(6)

> Research supports that vaccinating children will have no effect on combatting the pandemic.(4,8,9)



References

1. Covid Vaccine temporary licence agreements:

a. Pfizer

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-pfizer-biontech-vaccine-for-covid-19>

b. AstraZeneca

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca>

c. Moderna

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2. Vaccine clinical trials:

a. Pfizer

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04368728?term=NCT04368728&draw=2&rank=1>

b. Astrazeneca

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04516746>

c. Moderna

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04470427?term=NCT04470427&draw=2&rank=1>

3. Office of National Statistics UK.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/weeklyprovisionalfiguresondeathsregisteredinenglandandwales>

4. Pediatrics Journal, Incidence and Secondary Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 Infections in Schools

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5. NSPCC learning, Gillick Competency and Fraser guidelines

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/gillick-competence-fraser-guidelines>

6. Coronavirus vaccine - weekly summary of Yellow Card reporting

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or <https://yellowcard.ukcolumnn.org/yellow-card-reports>

6a. Yellow Card: please help to reverse the decline in reporting of suspected adverse drug reactions

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7. BBC news, Covid: Child jabs halted in trial as adult clot link probed

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8. COVID-19 Greenbook, chapter 14a

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/984310/Greenbook_chapter_14a_7May2021.pdf

9. The Lancet, Safety and efficacy of the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)32661-1/fulltext#sec1](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)32661-1/fulltext#sec1)

10. United Nations Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

11. The Nuremberg Code (1947) In: Mitscherlich A, Mielke F. Doctors of infamy: the story of the Nazi medical crimes. New York: Schuman, 1949:

xxiii-xxv.

12. Declaration of Helsinki

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Declaration-of-Helsinki>

Also visit:

<https://www.hartgroup.org>

<https://doctors4covidethics.medium.com>

COVID-19 Vaccine Roll Out To Children

Ethical concerns of unnecessary and unjustifiable risk

The roll out of new vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) under a temporary approval(1) has been the main tool promoted by the UK Government in the management of COVID-19. Clinical trials are ongoing and not due to be completed until 2023.(2)

Statistics show that the threat of COVID-19 to children is extremely low, with children less likely to become ill and no healthy children having died from COVID-19 in the UK to date.(3) Children are also extremely unlikely to spread COVID-19.(4)

The plan to vaccinate children against COVID-19 without parental consent, using only the Gillick Competency concept(5) to determine if the children understand the potential implications, is largely flawed, while the possible reactions to the vaccines are still unknown. The Government's Yellow Card Report has recorded more than 1,080,156 adverse reactions, thereof over 1466 deaths from the three vaccines available in the UK up to 14 July 2021.(6)

It is estimated that only 10% of serious reactions and between 2% and 4% of non-serious reactions are reported. (6a)

Duty of Care

It is important to understand the responsibility parents, carers and educators have to ensure the safety of children. COVID-19 vaccines are not licensed for use on children.(1) There is even less known about vaccines currently being developed and put forward for a temporary approval for use in children, except that they have caused same concerns as the current COVID-19 vaccines.(7)

The JCVI advises that only those children at very high risk of exposure and serious outcomes, such as older children with severe neuro-disabilities that require residential care, should be offered vaccination, with clear explanation to parents on the paucity of safety data.(8)

Trial data claims that there will be good protection (~90%) against serious illness and death once all adults have been offered vaccination. Once the vast majority of those at risk are protected against severe disease and death, transmission becomes much less relevant.(9)

Questions should be asked: Do children need this immunisation while the vaccines are still in the trial phase? Is the risk worth it for such a low risk of harm or transmission of COVID-19?

Ethical Duties

Not Just Following Orders

All teachers, headmasters, parents, carers and guardians of children have a duty to protect children's human rights and keep them safe, this is above any orders of any governing body or authority.

After World War II, a series of trials were held to hold members of the Nazi party responsible for a multitude of war crimes. The trials were led by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. Many trials have followed where "just following orders" is not deemed an excuse to act against an individual's human rights. These rights have been protected by multiple agreements and codes of conduct, most relevant are the Convention on the rights of Children,(10) the Nuremberg code (11) and the Declaration of Helsinki(12). It is everyone's duty to put human rights before orders.

"In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."

Convention on the rights of children, article 3.1(10)

Ethical Duties Continued

"The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential. This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, overreaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision. This latter element requires that before the acceptance of an affirmative decision by the experimental subject there should be made known to him the nature, duration, and purpose of the experiment; the method and means by which it is to be conducted; all inconveniences and hazards reasonably to be expected; and the effects upon his health or person which may possibly come from his participation in the experiment."

The Nuremberg Code (1947)(11)