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Inoculation – Best for Everyone

to inoculate or not should be more than just personal choice

One would think that preventative medication is a no-brainer. Why would anyone not take advantage of a simple procedure that reduces the risk of being infected by a debilitating, perhaps fatal disease? Surprisingly, there are those who decide against the option. Reasons are varied, from religious beliefs to personal choice; but, in my opinion, when the decision places others in danger, neither is valid.

In the past, childhood diseases were expected; and in some instances welcomed. When a youngster contracted measles, a common practice was to put them to bed with others of a similar age so that they all caught it. In a way, this home-spun remedy was a bit like inoculation; except that those confined copped the full whack of the disease instead of just a mild version. Still, it did give the majority the benefit of a lifetime's immunity. What worked for one was considered good for all; so illnesses such as mumps and whooping cough were dealt with in the same fashion. If one of those confined eventually succumbed to the disease and died, it was deemed unfortunate, but probably "meant to be". They were pretty stoical back then.

These days, people are less inclined to take medical matters into their own hands, knowing it is far safer to trust doctors and scientists who know what they are talking about. Some, however, continue to regard inoculation as a personal choice that has no repercussions other than being thought of as hard-line and aloof. They could argue that statistics declare the procedure as unsafe for some who may suffer an allergic reaction. This is true in a small minority of cases; but for most, inoculation is essential, not only for a single child's health, but also for that of any others they may come into contact with.

Child-care centres know the risks and how quickly diseases can spread. Quite a few are adopting the policy that children who have not been immunised or inoculated will be refused admission to their facilities. That is actually discrimination; but it is the commonsense kind levelled against selfish people who have no conscience regarding the health and safety of others. How can anyone condone subjecting children to the

pain and distress of an illness such as whooping cough? The older ones will not handle it well; and if they, in turn, pass it on to an infant sibling, they will suffer twice – firstly on their own account, and secondly when they have to watch a poor little mite, red-faced and coughing fit to burst. Seeing this is an experience even a complete stranger would find hard to bear.

So, with regard to inoculation, please put personal preferences aside and do the compassionate, humanitarian thing - spread the good word, not the disease!

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