

tween endemic amebiasis and epidemic amebic dysentery and in implementing effective longterm control measures.

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Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

The first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) was held at the Department of Health on March 5, 1987. The ACIP has 19 members with diverse backgrounds in public health, epidemiology, pediatrics, immunology, education, and nursing. Members of the Committee also represent various Bureaus in the Department of Health concerned with immunizations (the Bureaus of Disease Control, Drugs, Public Health, Medical Affairs, and the National Institute of Preventive Medicine), as well as the local health departments of Taiwan Province, Taipei City and Kaohsiung City. The function of the ACIP is to meet quarterly and review the current national immunization policies. The ACIP is organized into three working groups: Health Education, Logistics/Operational Research, and Policy Implementation. The agenda for the first meeting addressed three major issues: 1) whether to continue using typhoid and cholera vaccines, 2) how to simplify the current immunization schedule, and 3) whether the booster dose of BCG vaccine is necessary for elementary school students with negative PPD tests.

Regarding these three points, the ACIP made the following observations and recommendations:

Typhoid and Cholera Vaccines

- Both typhoid and cholera vaccines have low efficacy, short duration of immunity, and high rates of side-effects
- Neither vaccine has been shown to be useful in controlling outbreaks or epidemics of these diseases
- The incidence of both these diseases in Taiwan is steadily declining, primarily due to improvements in basic sanitation and hygiene
- The Committee therefore recommends that *the use of both vaccines be discontinued immediately*, and at the same time, efforts made to further improve sanitation and disease surveillance

Simplifying the Immunization Schedule

- The current immunization schedule requires a child to visit the health station at least 8 times to receive the required number of immunizations by age 12 months
- There are probably ways to combine several vaccinations to reduce the number of visits without compromising the immune response
- The ACIP recommends that the Hepatitis B Steering Committee, (HBSC) be consulted to review a proposed revision of the immunization schedule that will significantly reduce the number of visits, and the HBSC's recommendations will be considered at the next ACIP meeting

Booster Dose of BCG

- The ACIP recommends that the Taiwan Provincial TB Control Bureau collect data during the next TB prevalence survey that will help determine whether there is value in administering booster the dose of BCG to elementary school children

To strengthen the surveillance system and enrich the content of the *Bulletin*, we welcome accounts of interesting cases, outbreaks, environmental hazards, or other public health problems of current interest. Articles for publication and requests to be placed on the mailing list should be sent to: the Editor, *Epidemiology Bulletin*, Bureau of Disease Control, Department of Health, the Executive Yuan, Republic of China, P. O. Box 91-103 Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C., TEL: (02) 3962847

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