

# Polio is riskier than vaccine

Dear Dr. Cash:

Recently I read about a child who got paralytic polio after receiving the live (oral) polio vaccine. I'm afraid to continue the immunizations my child is supposed to have, but she can't go to school without them. Isn't there more danger of getting a disease with the vaccine than without it?

No. The chance of getting paralytic polio following the administration of the oral polio vaccine is less than one in 10 million doses, according to Dr. Thomas Shope of the infectious diseases division at Children's Hospital. But the risk of paralysis if you catch natural polio is one in every 1,000 cases. In addition, Dr. Shope questions whether all of the cases of polio attributed to the vaccine were, in reality, caused by it.

Some people have suggested that the killed polio vaccine (Salk) be used instead of the live, oral one. But the Salk vaccine requires continuous booster injections, while the original series of oral polio vaccine gives lifelong immunity without boosters. The

## "On Children"

By DR. RALPH CASH



Salk vaccine is recommended only for those rare people who have defective immunity.

Under no circumstances should you allow this small area of controversy to interfere with protection for your child. Pediatricians all over the country are concerned about the 20 million children who are inadequately immunized. President Carter has launched a national campaign to immunize the children by October 1979.

ALTHOUGH many doctors and adults have never seen a case of acute poliomyelitis or whooping cough, both still exist. And the potential for epidemics is always with us when large segments of the population are not immunized.

There has, however, been a change in our thinking about when the combination vaccine for hard measles (rubeola), German measles (rubella) and mumps should be given. Babies used to receive this

MMR vaccine at 10-12 months. But receiving it before one year of age may not guarantee lifelong immunity. The vaccine is now given at 15 months. Children who receive it earlier than one year, or in combination with gamma globulin, should get the booster. In fact, the recent outbreak of measles among college-aged students is attributed to inadequate immunization in infancy.

Another recommended vaccine is for diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus, commonly known as DPT. This is given at 2, 4 and 6 months of age, at the same time as the oral polio vaccine. It is repeated at 18 months and before entering school. The vaccine for diphtheria and tetanus should be repeated at 10-year intervals; but the pertussis vaccine is not given after age 5 because of the side effects.

This column is written as a service to the community by Children's Hospital of Michigan in the Detroit Medical Center. Questions from readers are welcomed. Address letters to Dr. Ralph Cash, Children's Hospital of Michigan, 3901 Beaubien, Detroit 48201.



### Law-McDowell

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth J. Law of Southfield announce the engagement of their daughter, Karen to Mark McDowell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin McDowell of Livonia.

The bride-elect was graduated from the University of Michigan in 1976 and is employed by Deloitte, Haskins and Sells, in Detroit. Her fiancé was graduated from U. of M. in 1977 with a BS in engineering and is employed by Arthur Anderson and Co. of Detroit. An August wedding is planned.

# Worker for retarded won't be forgotten

A woman who worked to see that retarded children would not be forgotten will be remembered by her co-workers for her long service.

Northwest Child Rescue Women, a local group serving mentally retarded persons, will be losing a loyal worker when Sara Mitteldorf leaves this community to retire with her husband Morris and family to Florida.

Until 1951, Mrs. Mitteldorf was uninvolved in community affairs. She was busy with her own retarded child but felt that there were injustices in treating the retarded who, at that time, were being kept hidden and forgotten.

She became one of the first persons in this area to totally and completely involve herself in a campaign to win equal rights for the mentally retarded. A founding member of the Detroit Association for Retarded Citizens, she served as its secretary and on its board of directors for ten years.

Mrs. Mitteldorf was also on the PTA

and helped develop curriculum for Special B classes, and developed and directed a Special Bureau for the Detroit Association of Retarded Citizens.

She belonged to Michigan and national associations for the retarded, as well. She participated in the National Association's special committee to expand Social Security benefits for the mentally retarded.

Her efforts led to camping programs for retarded children that the Northwest Child Rescue Women have funded for 36 years. The program was one of the first in the country and considered bold and daring at that time.

Between 150 and 200 retarded people spend two weeks each summer at Detroit Recreation Camp in Brighton, Mich. The camp is operated under the auspices of Detroit's parks and recrea-

tion department and is non-sectarian.

"Mrs. Mitteldorf will be missed by her many friends, family and co-workers," said Evelyn Kagan, a Southfield resident who is involved with the Northwest Child Rescue Women. We all wish her good health and happiness in her new surroundings."

## Extra, extra read all about it

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