

24 JUN MEASLES VACCINE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATED WITH LONG TERM HEALTH AND COGNITIVE BENEFITS

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MedicalResearch.com Interview with: Dr. Nandi

Arindam Nandi PhD

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MedicalResearch.com: What is the background for this study?

Response: The motivation for this study comes from a small but growing body of evidence on the potential long-term benefits of vaccines. The recent resurgence of measles outbreaks in several countries which had previously eliminated the virus makes our study additionally relevant. There have been over 1,000 measles cases reported across 28 states in the US so far in 2019, which is the largest number of cases the country has seen in almost 3 decades. Similarly high number of cases have been reported in several European countries in recent years. This study reiterates the importance of vaccination and proves the long-term benefits of the measles vaccine in low- and middle-income countries, which account for a large proportion of global measles cases.

MedicalResearch.com: What are the main findings?

Response: Our study found that measles vaccination at 6-18 months of life is associated with long-term health, cognition, and schooling benefits among children in Ethiopia, India, and Vietnam. At ages 7-8 years, measles-vaccinated children had significantly higher height-for-age Z scores in India (an increase of 0.13 points), and significantly higher BMI-for-age and weight-for-age z scores in Vietnam (an increase of 0.18 and 0.23 points) compared as with matched measles-unvaccinated children. Measles-vaccinated children scored 2.3, 2.5, and 2.7 points more on early grade reading assessments in Ethiopia, India, and Vietnam, respectively. Vaccinated children also attained

significantly higher schooling grades across all ages and countries compared to their measles unvaccinated counterparts.

MedicalResearch.com: What should readers take away from your report?

Response: During a time where vaccine hesitancy and mistrust in vaccines are high, readers should be reminded that beyond saving lives, vaccines are also associated with improved cognitive ability, education and physical stature- benefits that extend beyond early childhood. It is important to counter misinformation regarding vaccines with scientifically backed evidence on the immediate health as well as long-term benefits of vaccines. Near universal coverage of the measles vaccine (often considered to be around 95%) among eligible population is important for protecting own health and that of those who may not have access to the vaccine (e.g., low-income communities) or are ineligible for it (e.g., newborn children).

MedicalResearch.com: What recommendations do you have for future research as a result of this work?

Response: As a result of this study, future research should delve deeper into the limited literature on the long-term benefits of the measles vaccine, as well as the long-term benefits of vaccines in general.

MedicalResearch.com: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Response: *This is the second in a series of our studies examining the potential long-term benefits of vaccines. In another study which was published this month, we estimated similar child growth, cognitive, and schooling benefits of the Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) vaccine in India. <https://nyaspubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/nyas.14127>*

Any disclosures? One of the coauthors has previously received personal fees from GlaxoSmithKline plc, Merck, Pfizer, and Sanofi-Pasteur related generally to value of vaccination research but not this study. All other authors declared no conflict of interest. This disclosure statement was included in the study.

Citation:

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