

Decreasing Hepatitis B and Tuberculosis Vaccine Coverage Rates among Neonates in Poland, 2015-2017

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Abstract : Introduction: Recently, the number of parents who refuse to vaccinate their children or present so-called hesitant behaviors has increased in many developed countries. The study aimed to analyze the completeness and timeliness of vaccinations against hepatitis B and tuberculosis in neonates in a single maternity hospital in Warsaw (Poland). Material and Methods: We analyzed medical records of children born in the hospital between 1st January 2015 and 31st December 2016 and calculated the proportion of newborns not vaccinated on time. Results: The percentage of unvaccinated newborns was similar in the analyzed years: 7.2% in 2015 and 6.7% in 2016. Parental decisions rather than medical contraindications caused non-immunization (4.3% vs. 2.9% in 2015, and 4.7% vs. 2% in 2016). Most parents refused both vaccinations (81%-84%), whereas 7-8% refused only hep B vaccination, and 9-11% refused alone tuberculosis vaccination. The majority of hesitant parents decided to delay both vaccinations (70-80%), while 10-11% of parents chose to delay only one vaccination (hep B). In consecutive years, an increase in the percentage of parents delaying tuberculosis vaccination was reported (10 vs. 19%). Discussion: The increase in the number of newborns who are not correctly vaccinated just after birth due to their parents' decision should be considered non-gradual, both for hepatitis B and tuberculosis. It is necessary to implement effective educational and informative measures targeted at future parents to reinforce positive attitudes towards vaccinations and to dispel doubts about them among parents who are hesitant.

Keywords : hepatitis B, tuberculosis, immunization, new-borns, coverage rate

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