Government admission

Nearly all new polio cases are caused by vaccine

From 1980 to 1994, there were 133 cases of polio in the United States—and almost all of them were caused by the vaccine which was supposed to protect people against it.

A report in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report issued by the Centers for Disease Control, showed that 125 of the 133 cases of polio diagnosed during those years were the result of oral vaccines which contain live polio virus.

Health advocates have long urged the government to re-evaluate its recommendations concerning the use of live virus vaccines, but it has been slow to do so because of inactive virus vaccines’ higher cost.


Higher-risk polio vaccine called more cost effective

For decades, health care advocates have warned about the possible risks of administering live oral polio vaccines. Instead, they have urged the use of an inactivated vaccine which is less likely to cause polio.

A recent study by medical researchers gives a clear indication of why the switch has not been made: MONEY.

Right now, the U.S. pays more than $11 million each year in settlements with people who contract polio from the oral vaccine. Changing to the less risky type of vaccine would cost $28 million. It’s simply cheaper to stick with the live vaccine and sacrifice a certain number of people to lifelong disabilities.

The researchers noted: “The introduction of [inactivated polio vaccine] into the routine vaccination schedule would not be cost-beneficial at current vaccine prices and with the current compensation awards paid to vaccine-associated poliomyelitis cases.”

The researchers acknowledged that concern is growing about the safety of the current live vaccine. They stated that the higher expense “may be justified to assuage public concerns about adverse events associated with a government mandated vaccination program.”

Unfortunately, the study did not address the ethical question of making potential life-altering decisions based on monetary considerations.


“Inactive polio vaccine may not be cost effective.” American Medical News, October 7, 1996.