



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on December 26, 2018

## Are Objections to Chickenpox Vaccine “Junk Science”?

Remember that terrible chicken pox outbreak that struck North Carolina about a month ago — the one touted as the worst in the state’s history since the varicella (chickenpox) vaccine became available more than 20 years ago — the one that media blamed on the anti-vaccine community?

Your answer is probably “no” because: 1) the outbreak involved 36 children in a private elementary school, and 2) everyone is doing fine.



Nevertheless, media condemn the school as a “symbol of the small but strong” religious-exemption anti-vaccine movement, and say it “demonstrates the real-life consequences of a shadowy debate fueled by junk science and fomented by the same sort of Twitter bots and trolls that spread misinformation during the 2016 presidential election,” as [The Washington Post](#) ranted in November.

It is certainly true that since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the varicella vaccine in 1995, both numbers of cases and numbers of deaths have plummeted, as these Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [graphs illustrate](#). Seems to be an open-and-shut case, right?

Not so, according to other far more alarming CDC and health agency [statistics](#). Shingles, a disease also caused by the varicella virus and usually associated with the elderly, is on the rise, even among young people. And shingles rates have risen by nearly 40 percent since the mid-1990s in people over age 65.

What does this have to do with chicken pox? The long-running theory first proposed in 1892 by Hungarian doctor James Bokay and confirmed by researchers in 1925 and 1964, maintains that childhood exposure to chickenpox contributes to a long-lasting natural immunity to the shingles-causing virus throughout life. [Further studies](#) have concluded that adults who make periodic contact with chickenpox-infected children experience an asymptomatic boost to that natural immunity. So even though the chickenpox vaccine has reduced the number and severity of cases in children, it has potentially removed natural immunity in the population to a much more serious disease.

There are other objections that warrant consideration, despite the *Washington Post* label of “junk science.” Though proponents claim that the chickenpox vaccine is completely harmless, it is a medicine and — as the [CDC](#) points out — “there are risks in taking any medicine.”

Despite this well-known medical tenet, in 1986 Congress passed the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act, making vaccine manufacturers and doctors immune to liability for vaccine-related harm to patients. Parents can’t sue, even for brain damage, paralysis, or death. “Since then, the vaccine schedule has more than quadrupled, while the federal government has paid out \$3.75 billion to families who suffered vaccine damages, using funds supplied by a vaccine tax,” said Scott Guidry, M.D., in a February [Mississippi Christian Living](#) interview.

Payouts by the taxpayer-funded U.S. Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) actually topped \$4 billion in early December. Yet it seems even that sum pales in comparison to the problem: back in 2014 a U.S. Government Accountability Office [review](#) of VICP reported gross inefficiencies, delays and



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injustice in the program. Consumer advocates estimate that two-thirds of VICP petitioners are rejected. Regarding the varicella vaccine specifically, the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC) [chronicles](#) that as of late 2015, of the 122 claims VICP accepted, all involved serious injuries including eight deaths. NVIC goes on:

Using the MedAlerts search engine, as of July 31, 2018 there had been 3,936 serious adverse events reported to the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) in connection with chickenpox and varicella-containing vaccines since 1990, over half of those serious chickenpox vaccine-related adverse events occurring in children six years old and under. Of these chickenpox-vaccine related adverse event reports to VAERS, 192 were deaths, with over 70% of the deaths occurring in children under six years of age.

Dr. Guidry offers another compelling consideration which cannot be classified “junk science,” though it should be condemned as diabolical: “Among other potentially objectionable media, vaccines are cultured on the cell lines of aborted babies. In order to replenish older cell lines for continued vaccine research and production, new ones are being developed in China using ‘water-bag’ abortion.”

The so-called “water bag” method keeps the baby alive long enough to harvest live intact organs to aid in cell preparation, according to [Children of God for Life](#).

NVIC [explains](#) that labs grow viruses in these cell cultures, which in turn are used to prepare both inactive and live virus vaccines. The [Walvax-2](#) culture, used in a number of vaccines including those for chickenpox and shingles, comes from source tissue of nine fetuses provided by the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Yunnan Hospital in China.

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