

 **Measles problem in India** (*J Infect Dis*:2011;204 Suppl 1:S396-402)

In 2005, the World Health Assembly endorsed a global goal of 90% reduction in measles mortality from 2000 to 2010. Substantial progress has been made toward achieving this goal in countries of the South-East Asia Region (SEAR). More than 120 million children received a second dose of measles-containing vaccine during supplemental immunization activities conducted from 2000 to 2008; routine first-dose measles-containing vaccine coverage increased from 63% in 2000 to 75% by 2008; and measles surveillance is supported in all countries by the Measles-Rubella Laboratory Network. Overall, the estimated number of measles deaths decreased by 46% from 2000 to 2008. All countries except India have already achieved the 90% mortality reduction target. India is the only country in the region not to have universalized second dose of measles for its children in the National immunization program. Sustained political and financial commitment is required from the policymakers to achieve measles mortality reduction and elimination in India.

**EDITOR'S COMMENTS** *Had the policy-makers preferred 2nd dose of measles to 2G; millions of innocent children, and handful of those behind bars today, both could have been saved!*

 **Maternal folic acid supplementation prevents language delay** (*JAMA* 2011; 306(14):1566-73)

This prospective observational study recruited pregnant Norwegian women between 1999 and 2008. Maternal use of folic acid supplements within the interval from 4 weeks before to 8 weeks after conception was the exposure. Children's language competency at 3 years of age was measured by maternal report on a 6-point ordinal language grammar scale. Children with minimal expressive language (only 1-word or unintelligible utterances) were rated as having severe language delay. Children whose mothers took no dietary supplements in the specified exposure interval were the reference group ( $n = 9052$ ). Severe language delay was significantly associated with folic acid supplementation given alone (adjusted OR 0.55; 95% CI 0.35-0.86) or in combination with other supplements (adjusted OR 0.55; 95% CI, 0.39-0.78). The association was not seen (OR 1.04; 95% CI 0.62-1.74) when mother received other supplements, but no folic acid.

**EDITOR'S COMMENTS** *Folic acid closes the tube; and fixes the speech. Also; it is within everyone's reach!*

 **Benefits of rotavirus vaccine** (*New Engl J Med* 2011;365 :1108-17)

Routine vaccination of U.S. infants with pentavalent rotavirus vaccine (RV5) began in 2006. RV5 coverage and diarrhea-associated health care use from July 2007 through June 2009 *versus* July 2001 through June 2006 in children under 5 years of age were assessed. The national reductions in the number of hospitalizations for diarrhea, and associated costs were determined by extrapolation. Among children under 5 years of age, rates of hospitalization for diarrhea in 2001-2006, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 were 52, 35, and 39 cases per 10,000 person-years, respectively (relative reductions by 33% in 2007-2008 and by 25% in 2008-2009). Rates of hospitalization specifically coded for rotavirus infection showed relative reductions by 75% in 2007-2008 and by 60% in 2008-2009. Indirect benefits (in unvaccinated children) were seen in 2007-2008 but not in 2008-2009. Nationally, for the 2007-2009 period, there was an estimated reduction of 64,855 hospitalizations, saving approximately \$278 million in treatment costs.

**EDITOR'S COMMENTS** *Why all benefits are based on extrapolations while the adverse effects are to be based on actual figures - defies logic!*

 **Waste management in schools** (*J Environ Health* 2011 Sep;74(2):24-8.)

This descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted to assess solid waste management problems in 8 randomly selected secondary schools with average pupil populations not less than 500 per school in Ibadan, Nigeria. 400 questionnaires (50 per school) were administered. In addition, an observational checklist was used to assess the physical environment. Paper and plastics were the most frequently generated wastes. Common methods of solid waste disposal reported were use of dustbins for collection and open burning. Major problems perceived with current refuse disposal methods by the study students were odors, pest infestation, and spillages. Littering and spillages of solid waste was also commonly reported. Data suggested inadequate waste management facilities and practices in study schools.

**EDITOR'S COMMENTS** *Put a dustbin in every class room and by rotation, every pupil in the class gets a day to dispose it, also to be emulated by the teachers and the Principal!*

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