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## *Immunization Dialogue*

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### **DPT-OPV Immunization and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome**

**Q.** *Can DPT-OPV immunization cause Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)?*

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**A.** There is absolutely no reason to suggest that OPV might be involved, since no such association has been observed and also since there is no rational way to even remotely link the two. On the other hand, DPT has been a suspect for a long time as a cause of SIDS. There are two reasons for this, namely that injection is somewhat 'unnatural' and that the toxin of *Bordetella pertussis* is lethal in mice. A temporal relationship of SIDS occurring within a week, and more strikingly within 24 hours, of an injection of DPT has been reported previously, from countries in which SIDS is relatively more common(1-3). The age at which SIDS is most likely, namely 2-3 months, is also the age at which DPT is often given. Thus coincidence is to be expected. It is also natural to suspect that any unhappy event that happens in sequence to an intervention is its consequence. For these reasons, careful studies have been conducted both as case control and prospectively to determine if DPT contributes any risk for SIDS(4-7). However, no evidence was found to incriminate DPT as

a cause of SIDS. The consensus of opinions of advisory bodies in various countries in which this issue has been taken seriously, is that DPT has no causal association with SIDS(7,8).

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