Potential of typhoid conjugate vaccines in Fiji

Typhoid, a serious enteric fever spread through contaminated food and water, is a substantial public health issue that disproportionately impacts children and marginalized populations in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study estimates that, in 2017, there were nearly 11 million typhoid cases and more than 116,000 typhoid deaths worldwide. Additionally, strains of drug-resistant typhoid are spreading, causing global concern.

**TYPHOID CONJUGATE VACCINES**

Typhoid vaccination can reduce the need for antibiotics, slow expansion of drug-resistant strains, and save lives. Newly licensed and World Health Organization (WHO)-prequalified typhoid conjugate vaccines (TCVs) have several advantages over earlier typhoid vaccines. They:

- provide longer-lasting protection;
- require only one dose; and
- are suitable for young children over 6 months.

These qualities will allow better protection for younger children and expanded coverage through inclusion in routine childhood immunization programs.

**WHO RECOMMENDATION**

In March 2018, WHO recommended that typhoid-endemic countries introduce prequalified TCVs into routine childhood immunization programs as a single dose for infants and children over 6 months of age, accompanied by catch-up vaccination campaigns for children up to 15 years of age, where feasible. Additionally, WHO recommended prioritizing countries with a high burden of disease and/or a growing burden of drug-resistant typhoid, and in response to confirmed typhoid outbreaks.

**AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FIJI**

TCVs could have a benefit in Fiji, where typhoid inflicts a public health burden. The GBD estimates that, in 2017, Fiji had:

- 414 typhoid cases or 46 cases per 100,000 population, 51 percent of which were among children under 15 years of age; and
- 4 typhoid deaths, 58 percent of which were among children under 15 years of age.

Studies also show that the rate of typhoid fever in Fiji is increasing. In addition, typhoid likely imposes an economic burden. Analyses from other settings in the region found that families often bear a significant cost, especially for cases in young children. Available global modeling data predict that routine TCV vaccination plus catch-up would be more cost-effective compared with routine vaccination only. Routine TCV vaccination alone is predicted to be cost-effective compared with no vaccination in many countries.

**References**


Learn more and join the effort at www.takeontyphoid.org.

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