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VACCINATION-INDUCED IMMUNE HEMOLYTIC ANEMIA

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Vaccination has been incriminated as a trigger of childhood acute autoimmune hemolytic anemia only in isolated cases.We report on a 3,5-month-old girl admitted to the Department of Paediatrics, Rijeka, Croatia, because of jaundice. Ten days prior to the admission the second dose of recombinant hepatitis B vaccine (Engerix B, SmithKline Beecham) was given to the infant. Her prior medical history was uneventful. At admission the baby was pale and jaundiced. The spleen was palpable below the costal margin. Laboratory findings revealed Hb concentration of 7,1 g/dL, total bilirubin 9,1 mg/dL, and high reticulocyte count (0,126).Serologic assays for CMV, EBV, herpes simplex, and HIV, and cultures from blood, urine, and stools were negative. Anti-HBs antibodies were positive. Direct antiglobulin test (DAT) was strongly positive for IgG; IgA, IgM, and C3d were negative. The patient was treated with corticosteroids and intravenous immunoglobulin. She experienced three attacks of hemolysis during the course of the disease. After two months of therapy she recovered completely with negativization of DAT. To our knowledge, only two cases of immune hemolytic anemia have been described in association with hepatitis B vaccine.