



Letter to the Editor

Immunization of preterms with hexavalent combined diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis-hepatitis B-inactivated poliovirus-Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine: The position of the Italian Pediatric Society



To the chief Editor of Vaccine

Dear Editor,

We read with interest the article by Omeneca F et al. "Immunization of preterm infants with GSK's hexavalent combined diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis-hepatitis B-inactivated poliovirus-Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine: A review of safety and immunogenicity" on the immunogenicity of a hexavalent vaccine in preterm infants [1].

As a Scientific Society, we underline the indication of vaccinate preterm infants according both to their chronological age and to the same schedule of full-term infants.

Omeneca et al report the Italian pediatric Society recommendation on the choice of vaccine to be used for preterm infants in a way that do not correspond to the official position of the Italian Pediatric Society.

In detail, the sentence "The Italian Pediatric Society recommends to only use vaccines that have been studied in infant populations with a history of prematurity" is not correct [1]. The Italian Pediatric Society recommends the immunization of preterms with the same products used for full term ones. The absence of a specific indication in the vaccine technical schedule for preterms does not represent a real contraindication for the use of that product [2].

In Italy, no increase in preventable infectious diseases have been noted between preterm and full-term infants when the 2-dose primary and booster schedules schedule hexavalent combined diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis-hepatitis B-inactivated poliovirus-Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine is applied in the two groups [3].

References

- [1] Omeñaca F, Vázquez L, Garcia-Corbeira P, Mesaros N, Hanssens L, Dolhain J, et al. Immunization of preterm infants with GSK's hexavalent combined diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis-hepatitis B-inactivated poliovirus-Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine: a review of safety and immunogenicity. *Vaccine* 2018;36(7):986–96.
- [2] Società Italiana di Pediatria (SIP). Società Italiana di Neonatologia (SIN). Chiarimenti circa la schedula de vaccino esavalente Infanrix hexa nei lattanti nati prematuri. <<https://www.sip.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Chiarimenti-su-vaccino-esavalente-e-prematuri-1.pdf>>.
- [3] Dati di sorveglianza delle malattie batteriche invasive aggiornati al aprile 2017. <http://www.iss.it/binary/mabi/cont/Report_MBI_20170403_finale.pdf>.

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Available online 4 June 2018