



Routine childhood immunization may protect against COVID-19



To the editor,

Coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) is an emerging pandemic disease as declared by WHO in March 2020 [1]. It is caused by coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and presented by fever, sore throat and complicated by pneumonia and severe acute respiratory distress. SARS-CoV-2 is single-stranded RNA virus belongs to Betacoronavirus [2]. Different age groups are susceptible to infection, however SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2 seem to less commonly infect children and to cause milder symptoms, and are associated with much lower case-fatality rates and most of them recover quickly from the infection [3].

This mysterious lower rate of fatality and symptomatic illness could be advocated to the global active viral immunization of children from birth till six years. For example, varicella, Hepatitis B, MMR, Poliomyelitis, and rotavirus [4]. All of these immunizations together, with special concern for vaccines that result in transient rather than long-lasting as in mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, Hepatitis B, and varicella build the immunity against SARS-CoV-2 protecting lung cells from invasion. Cross reactivity between vaccination and other viral genus was been stated as that occurred when serum antibodies of HIV emerged after measles vaccination [5]. Most routine viral vaccines are either inactivated or killed vaccines stimulate T Helper 1 cells (CD4+) to secrete many different types of cytokines as interferon gamma, interleukin-2 (IL-2), and IL-12. IL-2 provokes the maturation of the killer T cell and improve the cytotoxicity of natural killer cells recognizing and destroying cells infected with viruses [5]. Another theory for children sparing by COVID-19 could be the low immunity in childhood that doesn't exaggerate the immune response against the virus as adult do [6].

MMR is already been used to induce by stander immunity against other virus strains. For example, in dermatology field, warts that caused by human papilloma virus could be ameliorated using intralesional MMR vaccine. For the same purpose, we recommend using one or combined vaccination of varicella, Hepatitis B, MMR, Poliomyelitis, or rotavirus to either protect or treat the emerging epidemic of COVID-19 [6]. We recommend several clinical trials to be taken for assessing their prophylactic and/ or therapeutic efficacy in the emerging COVID-19.

Funding sources

The article has no funding source

Prior presentation

No data from this manuscript were presented in a scientific meeting before.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mehy.2020.109689>.

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