

## MMR/AUTISM NEW RESEARCH

PRESS RELEASE FROM ARCH – AUTISM RESEARCH CAMPAIGN FOR HEALTH  
[Press Release from parents with children with autism and inflammatory bowel disease.]

Today the press report that John O'Leary (Professor of Molecular Pathology, Trinity College, Dublin) has found the MMR strain of measles virus in the guts of 12 children with autism who received the MMR vaccine.

This raises important questions about the role that the MMR plays in the late onset of autism in children who have received the jab.

Parents whose children have developed autism and gastro-intestinal disease are saddened by the government's failure to take more seriously the growing evidence that the MMR is implicated in new variant gastro-intestinal damage and autism.

The government must now act to safeguard children whose parents ask whether to vaccinate their children.

The government should:

- remove all publicity stating the MMR is indisputably safe
- commission clinical studies to investigate the role of the MMR in autism and bowel disease
- provide single measles vaccines to children at no cost.

The latest study contests the findings of a review commissioned by the British Medical Association and published last week in Clinical Evidence. The review was billed as "the most in depth analysis" of research into MMR/Autism link. But, out of 2000 scanned, it only lists 36 studies as relevant.

In fact the study ignores the growing number of clinical studies showing measles virus in the guts of autistic children, such as the work of Professor O'Leary. It only refers to a pilot study by Andrew Wakefield et al published in 1998, which first suggested the role of bowel disease in autism and raised questions about the safety of the MMR

It ignores the entire research programme of Dr Andrew Wakefield et al since 1998, which includes over twenty papers examining pathological changes to the gut, including the guts of autistic children.

Since the late 1990s, a growing body of research has raised suspicions about the safety of the MMR vaccine and pointed to the role of measles virus in autism and bowel disease. The MMR appears to be safe for the majority, but not for a small group of susceptible children.

## BACKGROUND

1. The latest evidence is part of a paper presented at a meeting next month of the Pathological Society of Great Britain and Ireland. The 12 children are part of a larger sample of 75 autistic children who were found to have traces of measles, reported in a medical journal in January this year (Uhlmann, V. et al (2002) 'Potential viral mechanism for new variant inflammatory bowel disease' Molecular Pathology, No. 55, pp 0-6).

2. Wakefield has sought to collaborate with the Department of Health over many years, but to little avail.

3. Several studies in addition to Wakefield's research have identified autistic children with distinct bowel disease, 'autistic enterocolitis' (Wakefield, A. et al (2000) 'Enterocolitis in children with developmental disorders' American Journal of Gastroenterology, 95, 2285-2295). Most recently, Timothy Buie, from Harvard General Hospital, has presented findings of chronic inflammation in the intestinal tract of autistic children to the Oasis 200 Conference for Autism in Portland, Oregon. This will shortly be published.

4. One study shows that these children have a distinct change in the cell structure of the bowel. (Furlano, R I et al (2001) 'Colonic CD8 and ?? T-cell infiltration with epithelial damage in children with autism', The Journal of Pediatrics, Vol. 138, No. 3, 366-372)

5. Other studies have found the colonisation of live measles virus in the guts of such children and a close temporal relationship between the MMR and onset of bowel disease. (Montgomery, S M et al (1999) Paramyxovirus Infections in Childhood and Subsequent Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Gastroenterology, No. 116, 796-803)

6. Studies have questioned the safety of the original trials into the MMR, which monitored adverse reactions in no more than four weeks following MMR vaccination of children, and so failed to examine possible links between administering MMR and autism – a condition whose onset is long-term and insidious (e.g. Wakefield, A. and Montgomery, S M 'Measles, mumps, rubella vaccine: through a glass, darkly' Adverse Drug Reaction Toxicology Review, Vol. 19, No. 4, 265-283).

#### ABOUT ARCH

ARCH is a group of parents campaigning for more clinical research into the causes and treatment of acquired autism – that is, where a normal, healthy, developing child acquires autism.

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