

Autism as a Minamata disease variant: analysis of a pernicious legacy

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Abstract

Minamata Disease is a myriad of neurological and neurodevelopmental symptoms stemming from the pollution of Minamata Bay, Japan with 27 tons of organic mercury by the Chisso Corporation. The corporation denied responsibility and continued to pollute waterways for three decades. While research findings showing mercury was the cause of Minamata disease were concealed by the corporation, a number of committees, of which Chisso Corporation employees were members, were formed to research the problem. The committees denied this information and refuted the direct link of mercury. Today, the causes of autism and several neurodevelopmental disorders may be linked to mercury. Genetic and environmental risk factors are involved, but the epidemic increase in autism parallels cumulative mercury exposure through Thimerosal containing vaccines. Children with autism have a decreased detoxification capacity with a higher mercury exposure during pregnancy due to maternal dental amalgam and Thimerosal containing immunoglobulin shots. In vitro, mercury and Thimerosal in levels found after vaccination inhibit methionine synthase (MS) by 50%. Normal function of MS is crucial in biochemical steps necessary for brain development, attention and production of glutathione, an important mercury-detoxifying agent. Autistic children have significantly decreased levels of reduced glutathione. Numerous committees from numerous agencies have met in response to the growing evidence in support of mercury as the etiology of a growing epidemic. Research papers were created and reports generated all apparently predetermined to exonerate Thimerosal and control vaccine policy, from both within and outside the United States. Today, Thimerosal has been reintroduced back into the routine vaccine schedule with pressure from the WHO and the CDC based on the strength of what appears to be flawed and/or fabricated data whose influence remains unchecked; meanwhile, mercury exposure continues to increase the number of learning disabled and dependent children.

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