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## Unanswered Safety Questions

### **Who is at risk for vaccine injury?**

A 2013 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report evaluating the safety of the childhood vaccination schedule reaffirmed that there are significant gaps in scientific evidence concerning vaccine safety. This IOM committee could only find fewer than 40 scientific studies published in the previous 10 years concerning the safety of the federally recommended vaccine schedule administered to infants and young children. Additionally, this committee found limited scientific data regarding subpopulations of children who may be genetically at higher risk for suffering vaccine injury and death.

*“The committee found that evidence assessing outcomes in subpopulations of children, who may be potentially susceptible to adverse reactions to vaccines (such as children with a family history of autoimmune disease or allergies or children born prematurely), was limited and is characterized by uncertainty about the definition of populations of interest and definitions of exposures or outcomes.” – Institute of Medicine – 2013<sup>1</sup>*

Vaccination must remain a choice because it is a medical product administered to healthy people, and it carries the risk of injury or death. While we are all born equal, with equal rights under the law, we are not all born the same and we do not all respond the same way to pharmaceutical products like vaccines. In most cases, doctors cannot predict in advance who will suffer harm from vaccines and be permanently injured or killed.

**Why should the lives of those vulnerable to vaccine complications be valued any less than those vulnerable to complications of infections?**

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of Medicine Committee on the Assessment of Studies of Health Outcomes Related to the Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule. The Childhood Immunization Schedule and Safety: Stakeholder Concerns, Scientific Evidence and Future Studies. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press 2013. (<https://www.nap.edu/read/13563/chapter/2#11>)