



Common Questions about

National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

If a person may have been harmed by a vaccine, what does the federal government do about it?

All recommended vaccines are covered under a federal program known as the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP), established by the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986. The VICP is a “no-fault” system designed to compensate people determined to have been injured by vaccines.

- The process begins when a representative of the injured child files a petition with the United States Court of Federal Claims. The VICP reviews whether a person qualifies under the law as having a vaccine-related injury, and, if so, determines compensation such as financial support for special education, medical care, or other necessary compensatory measures.
- If the VICP denies the claim, a person may still file a claim against the vaccine manufacturer or the health care professional who gave the vaccine.
- Claims of injury must be examined through the VICP before civil litigation is pursued.
- Claims are paid from the Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund, which is funded by an excise tax on each vaccine given. The excise tax is included in the cost price of each dose of vaccine.
- The federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which oversees the VICP, has a website that explains what the VICP is, how it was created, and how to file a claim. In addition, a summary of current issues and answers to frequently asked questions are provided, as is a monthly report on program activities. The web address is www.hrsa.gov/bhpr/vicp.
- The VICP also has a public information line. For information about the VICP call 1-800-338-2382.

Source:

Vaccine Injury Compensation Program Web site (www.hrsa.gov/bhpr/vicp)

Recommended books and Web sites on this topic:

Humiston SG and Good C. *Vaccinating your child: Questions & answers for the concerned parent.* Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers; 2000.

Offit PA and Bell LM. *Vaccines: What every parent should know, revised edition.* New York: IDG Books; 1999.

Food and Drug Administration Web site (www.fda.gov/cber/vaers/vaers.htm).

Vaccine Injury Compensation Program Web site (www.hrsa.gov/bhpr/vicp).