



Marina Jane McQuaig
May 14, 2000–November 26, 2008

Marina will always be loved and greatly missed by her parents Randy and Janaia, her big brother, Connley, and her little sister Jaelene.

“There is a great deal of evidence to prove that immunization of children does more harm than good.”

—Dr J. Anthony Morris, former Chief Vaccine Control Officer and research virologist, US FDA

I was given a flu shot with thimerosal [a mercury-containing preservative] when I was eleven weeks pregnant with Marina. The flu shot was recommended because I'm asthmatic. After the shot I felt wretchedly ill to the stomach and had nausea and diarrhea. Normally, I avoided using asthma medication because I didn't want to harm my developing baby, but then I had to use it because the flu shot gave me oculo-respiratory syndrome and I couldn't breathe.

I guess I never considered vaccines a medication because of the way they're advertised. Marina was born with cutis aplasia [improper skin development] on her hands and feet, which to me is an obvious result of the vaccine because the last layer of skin forms at around the eleventh week of pregnancy. At two months she was diagnosed with epilepsy; but she usually would never have more than one or two seizures a day. Because health authorities do not withhold vaccination for something they consider such a minor health problem [i.e., an evolving neurological condition], Marina was injected with all the usual infant vaccines on schedule at 2, 4, 6 and 12 months.

Looking back, she did have reactions to most of the vaccines, but we never linked it the way we should have. At 18 months, Marina was due for the seven vaccines given then: diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, Haemophilus influenzae B, chickenpox and meningococcus. She had been free of seizures for a year except for one possible seizure we didn't see but suspected she had about two weeks before the 18 month vaccines.

We told our paediatrician and the health nurse about this but

the nurse told me they'd changed the vaccine and it no longer affected seizures. At the time of the vaccines Marina had a cold and she'd not been well for a few weeks. I kept asking the nurse if it was all right to go ahead. She said yes and just to give Marina Tylenol for the next twenty four hours. Two days later, Marina was rushed to the Children's Hospital. She was “status”—meaning she was having seizure after seizure without coming out of them in between.

After two weeks in the hospital, one of them in ICU, and seizing almost daily, up to nine a day, I started to ask why this happened. I then reported the incident to the Health Unit. When I followed up a couple of weeks later no one knew what I was talking about and was told that it is completely safe to have all of these vaccinations.

Marina came close to death 60 hrs after the seven vaccine doses. Unbelievably, public health carried on as if nothing had happened.

We have a copy of her chart and it is written in there that ‘Communicable Diseases’ believes that Marina should go ahead with the regular vaccine schedule. Since then we had seen an immunologist who was skeptical at first, but after a two hour appointment and listening to our story, said he would not be comfortable recommending any vaccine for Marina or myself.

The quote in the letter he wrote was that it is “difficult to predict the risk with subsequent vaccines for either mom or Marina with this history.” The statement from the neurologist

was that the vaccines were a “major contributing factor” to Marina’s adverse reactions. The genetics department, I believe, does believe that Marina’s damage initiated with the flu shot, but is just not clear exactly how she was damaged. But because public health denies any connection, what happened to Marina will not go to ‘statistics’ to help prevent the same thing happening again. Unbelievably, Marina’s severe reaction two days after vaccination is not considered an adverse reaction. I hope one day, if enough parents continue to tell their stories, our children will be protected.

At age three, Marina was still not doing well. Life was a constant struggle, taking her in and out of hospital, trying various drugs that didn’t work. She was only then beginning to crawl and was severely developmentally delayed. Recalling the horror of the severe reaction when we walked into her room 60 hours afterwards and she was having one seizure after another. She still had this pattern to cluster and the fear was that one day there will not be a drug to stop it.

Received from Jania McQuaig Dec 23, 2014 via email:

Six years after my daughter, Marina Jane McQuaig, passed away in the night of a seizure disorder that was consistently one step forward two steps back, my older two children and I were in need of a new Medical Doctor as ours was away ill for an undetermined amount of time.

I walked into Dr. R’s office at the Riley Park Primary Care Centre for a “New Patient Meeting”, reviewed my health history and we both asked questions. I had told her that I was not able to take morphine, that we had a family history of adverse reaction to morphine so my children should also probably not take it—that was fine.

At the end she told me she would like to see me as a new patient. She then asked about the flu shot. I told her my story and Marina’s story ending in death, beginning with a flu shot I received and reacted to at 11 weeks pregnant. I also told her that my other daughter is a Type 1 Diabetic so she has an autoimmune disease. As well, we are still discovering allergies in my son such as grass, dust and cats and that my children’s father and I both reacted adversely to vaccinations as children.

I also said that I had an allergy to eggs which no one cautioned me about back in 1999 when I was administered that flu shot which contains egg residue, and that allergy to eggs is a contraindication. So my answer was that no, my children and I would not be receiving the flu vaccination. She then proceeded to ask about the rest of the childhood immunizations and I told her I had chosen to stop all vaccines for now based on our entire history of reactions which ultimately led to the death of my child.

I said until my children are grown and then, if at some point they were going to travel or choose a line of work that puts them at risk, we would sit down and consider which vaccines might be appropriate. I told her I was advocating for them as individuals and not simply for the benefit of society based on considerable amounts of evidence and negative past experiences which, as you can imagine, almost destroyed my life and did destroy my child’s life.

She politely told me that she would love to see me as a patient and that I seemed “very nice” but that she would not see my children because she has a policy that she will not see children who are not up to date on their vaccinations.

One drug adverse reaction and choice to not take it again was fine, but another was not? Does she have the right to discriminate against children who may be at risk for an adverse reaction to a drug and choose to deny them medical treatment? How do you ever say to a mother that she is worthy of health care but her children are not? What is wrong with this doctor? Is this what our world has come to? I had hung up my belt and put away my war paint in my fight against herd immunization and only tell my story to those who are close, but dear doctor your choice to discriminate against my children has forced me to done my gloves for another round.

I tried for years to bring awareness to the risks of vaccine adverse reactions so that other children who might be at greater risk could be protected, especially those with seizure disorders. After years of gathering information and proof that some children should not be vaccinated, especially at certain or uncertain times, then to be told that for “society’s sake” the regular recommended vaccine program must continue without concern for the individual but for society as a whole.

After years of standing by my decision and satisfied that we have a choice as parents and pregnant women, and that we can choose to say NO in our

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free country and then to be unjustly discriminated against by complete ignorance and inexperience is absolutely appalling.

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In 1999 when I received the flu shot I WAS NOT TOLD about the potential risks if one has an egg allergy. I had a severe reaction at 11 weeks pregnant following which I was severely ill for days after. I’m not even sure they knew the name of it at the time, but they called it “oculo-respiratory syndrome”. A syndrome unknown by the immunologist I took my children to a couple of years later. I was shocked and upset because as an immunologist he should have been the first to be informed of this possible reaction.

NO ONE TOLD ME that the monograph which accompanied the 4 in 1 Quadracel shot Marina received that day indicated that her neurological disorder should have been taken into consideration. Marina should NOT have been given the pertussis component of the vaccine that day, let alone all of the vaccines together—something that had never even been studied at that point, and that we were the study.

The manufacturers of Quadracel recommended “deferral of the pertussis component of the vaccination in children with a progressive, evolving, or unstable neurologic condition (including seizures) because administration of the pertussis component may coincide with the onset of overt manifestations of such disorders and result in confusion about causation” (QUADRACEL TM, Aventis Pasteur SA, Lyon France, July 1998). This is exactly what we believe happened to Marina.

I understand that some medical professionals don’t believe the immunizations are responsible for the onset of this episode of seizures because of lack of proof. I don’t know how much more obvious it could be when everything is taken into consideration that the immunizations were a major contributing factor.

Not only were we not informed of this possibility we were not even told to watch her. If I had known all of the facts, common sense would have told me that Marina was not ready to be vaccinated that day with one vaccine, let alone all of them. I could have made a more informed decision as well as consult with her neurologist as to how and when to proceed. If there was any possibility that my child’s life was in danger that day, I should have known about it.

I WANT TO TELL YOU that it is called “herd immunization” for a reason and that you will not be told all the information needed to make an informed decision. You are the only one who loves your child enough to consider them an individual and know how they will individually react. Otherwise you are putting them at risk to take one for “Team Society” for prevention and disease control.

You know your child... You are the one who ultimately has the choice still, here in Canada, to hold off on certain vaccinations for certain reasons; so I ask you not to give up that right to choose. Protect that right to choose. Please never do as I did and look back regretfully and say, “NO ONE TOLD ME”.

—We appreciate Janai’s kind permission to publish Marina’s Story. Note: Marina’s case is not an isolated incident. At VCC, we are aware of many children who have been left severely damaged or have died following vaccinations.