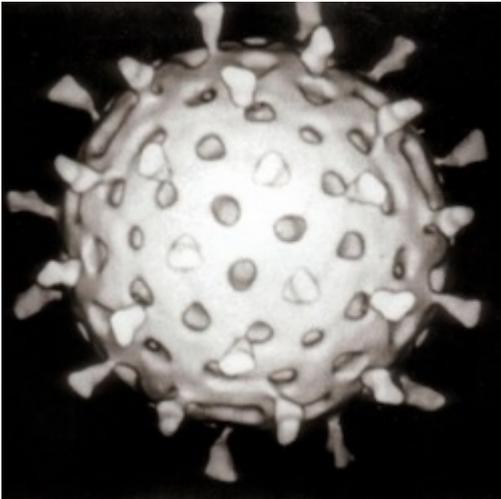


Diarrhea Outbreaks: A Glimpse into Anti-Vaxxer Utopia



By Alex Berezow, PhD — April 27, 2018



Credit: Graham Beards/Wikipedia [1]

Measles, which still [kills about 90,000 people](#) [2] around the world every year, isn't the only microbe making a comeback. Rotavirus could too, a bug that causes diarrhea and [kills around 200,000 children](#) [3] under the age of five.

The [CDC immunization schedule](#) [4] recommends that babies receive their first dose of rotavirus vaccine at the age of two months. However, only about 73% of American children have completed all doses. Once again, we are flirting with a preventable disaster.

Like all vaccines, the rotavirus vaccine is not 100% effective. The CDC estimates that the rotavirus vaccine is roughly 80% to 90% effective against moderate to severe cases. However, even if every child was properly vaccinated, outbreaks of mild rotavirus illness are expected to occur. That's why it is vitally important for every healthy baby who is capable of receiving the vaccine do so and *on time*. Vaccination helps prevent *severe* illness and the spread of this highly contagious virus to other people.

Rotavirus Outbreaks

Three rotavirus outbreaks that occurred in the State of California underscore the threat posed by rotavirus and the importance of vaccination.

The first occurred in March at a daycare facility in which 31 people became sick. Because rotavirus spreads easily, five additional household contacts became ill. In April, nine people were infected in an adult assisted living and memory care facility. And in May, 27 people were sickened at a medical care facility for children with complex medical needs. One child, who had serious

underlying health problems, died from rotavirus-induced dehydration.

Despite the reality of measles, rotavirus, and a plethora of other infectious diseases, there is yet another anti-vaccine movement afoot in California whose aim is to turn the clock back to the 10th Century.

California: The Land that Science Forgot

According to [Ars Technica](#) [5], if the lunatics behind the latest ballot initiative get their way, the following would occur: Vaccination requirements would be eliminated. Water would no longer be chlorinated or fluoridated. GMOs and 300 other "chemicals" would be banned. Smart meters would be removed. Keep in mind that vaccination and water chlorination are considered to be two of the three [pillars of public health](#) [6].

Even in the kooky State of California, this initiative is unlikely to pass. But it's still California. Anything *could* happen. After all, this is the state that just [declared that coffee causes cancer](#) [7].

So, if the initiative does pass, the next step is for California to change its nickname from "The Golden State" to "The Land that Science Forgot." Actually, it might want to do so anyway.

Source [8]: Burke RM, Tate JE, Barin N, et al. "Three Rotavirus Outbreaks in the Postvaccine Era — California, 2017." *MMWR* 67(16):470-472. Published: 27-Apr-2018. DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm6716a3.

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Links

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotavirus#/media/File:Rotavirus_Reconstruction.jpg

[2] <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/measles>

[3] http://www.who.int/immunization/monitoring_surveillance/burden/estimates/rotavirus/en/

[4] <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf>

[5] <https://arstechnica.com/science/2018/02/california-green-lights-initiative-thats-a-conspiracy-theorists-dream/>

[6] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/09/13/homeless-camps-are-infectious-disease-time-bombs-11820>

[7] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2018/04/02/if-coffee-needs-cancer-warning-then-houses-need-ghost-warning-12785>

[8] <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6716a3.htm>