New study confirms the obvious: chickenpox vaccine works

By ACSH Staff — August 14, 2015

Well this isn’t surprising at all. Since the chickenpox vaccine became available in the US in 1995, there has been a significant reduction in chickenpox cases, according to a new study [1] published in the Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society.

Before the vaccine became available in 1995, there were about 4 million cases of chickenpox (varicella) in the US each year, resulting in nearly 11,000 annual hospitalizations and 100-150 deaths. A second dose of the vaccine was recommended in 2006.

The study, led by CDC researchers Jessica Leung, MPH, and Rafael Harpaz MD, MPH, included national health care claims data from 1994 to 2012. The analysis showed that there were 93 percent fewer hospitalizations for chickenpox in 2012 versus the pre-vaccination period (1994-1995). During the two-dose vaccination period, hospitalizations declined 38 percent. Additionally, outpatient visits declined 83 percent in 2012 versus the pre-vaccination period, and declined 60 percent during the two-dose vaccination period.

We document from our large study population that the varicella vaccination program has led to significant declines in outpatient visits and hospitalizations from the prevaccination period through 2012, with additional declines during the 2-dose varicella vaccination period, the authors conclude.

The science is clear vaccines work!