

Typhoid Fever — Planned Immunization

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THE PAST five summers witnessed the yearly occurrence of epidemics of typhoid fever, the epidemics ranging from those of minor to major proportion.

Because of the current epidemic, once more we are obliged to institute immunization programmes on an emergency basis which is not without risks.

There is a prejudice on the part of the population (as judged by the number of enquiries) against the parenteral form of vaccine against typhoid fever. This of course is due to the local and systemic reaction associated with this form of vaccine. As an alternative there is an oral form of vaccine against typhoid fever which is effective if taken according to the following instruction.

The vaccine is taken one hour before a meal. The two white capsules contain bicarbonate and are swallowed with water first. Five minutes later, is taken the pink-white capsule, which contains live attenuated typhi 21 a. This is a strain that does not cause typhoid fever but has the immunogenic capacity of typhoid bacilli. The same capsules are repeated on day 4 and day 7. Immunization is established within 10 days.

For a child or an adult who cannot swallow capsules, the capsules can be opened and their content swallowed with water. No antibiotics are taken during the period of taking the vaccine.

The Editorial Board of the Bahrain Medical Bulletin in its publication April 1983, Vol. 5, No. 1 made an appeal that active immunization against typhoid fever be instituted in March-April of every second year, i.e. before the summer months. Again with respect we make the same appeal.

— Bahrain Medical Bulletin, April '83, Vol. 5, No. 1.

— Bulletin World Health Organization 58-469-474 (1980).