

# Vexed, Vaxed, and Vehement...?

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# The Gift of Life

- All life is a precious gift from a loving and grace-filled God *Genesis 2:7*
- We have been created in God's image *Genesis 1:27*
- He sustains all things *Hebrews 1:3*
- God heals our diseases *Psalms 103:3*
- Without Him was nothing made that has been made *John 1:2*



# Lifestyle

- Lifestyle principles are *foundational* to the Seventh-day Adventist Health Message and germane to who we are
- Despite our brokenness, optimal lifestyle practices foster positive health outcomes
- This includes our “*fearfully and wonderfully made*” immune system – what a Creator our God is!! (*Psalms 139*)
- Optimal health and lifestyle practices help maintain the function of the whole being *and* immune system at its best.



# Principles of Adventist Health Ministry

- The Bible is foundational
- Consonant with the Spirit of Prophecy counsels
- Confirmed by peer-reviewed, evidence-based health science

*General Conference Working Policy*



# Principles of Adventist Health Ministry

Rightly understood, science and the written word agree, and each sheds light on the other. Together they lead us to God by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which He works. Ellen White, CT 426.2



# Lifestyle Interventions are foundational

- CELEBRATIONS®
- NEWSTART®
- NEWSTART-*plus*®
- CREATION HEALTH®
- 8 Weeks to Wellness®
- Win Wellness®... and more



# Lifestyle Habits

- Exercise – daily
- Liquids – mainly pure, fresh water
- Sunshine – careful, regular exposure
- Rest – seven to eight hours each night
- Fresh air



# Lifestyle Habits

- Balance/temperance
- Balanced nutrition

“The Nutrition Source: Nutrition and Immunity,” Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health,

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/nutrition-and-immunity/>



# Life Habits

- Positive, informed choices
- Optimistic, hopeful outlook
- Integrity
- Positive supportive relationships and connectedness
- ***Trust in God – foundational***
- *And an important adjuvant to prevention is immunization – it is **not** either or.*



# Monitor Your Health

- Know your numbers – weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol
- **Act** on your numbers
- Regular health checkups – at least annual
- Do not ignore symptoms



# Minimize Your Risk (and that of others)

- Wash your hands often
- Avoid contact with people who have known infections
- Wear masks appropriately
- Stay at home if you are symptomatic – fever, cough, runny nose
- Clean and disinfect regularly-touched surfaces
- Responsible, informed Immunization



# What does the Church say about vaccines?

- Statement from 2015: “... *the Church encourages responsible immunization, and as such we have no religious or faith-based reason not to encourage our adherents to responsibly participate in protective and preventive immunization programs.*”

*Responsible immunization – thought-through, studied, evidence-based. Benefits outweigh the risks.*



# What does the Church say about immunization?

*“We are not the conscience of the individual church member, and recognize individual choices. These are exercised by the individual. The choice not to be immunized is not and should not be seen as the dogma nor the doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”* Immunization Statement 2015

<https://www.adventist.org/articles/immunization/>



# What does the Church say about COVID-19 Vaccines?

- <https://adventist.news/en/news/covid-19-vaccines-addressing-concerns-offering-counsel>
- <https://www.healthministries.com/covid-19-vaccines-addressing-concerns-offering-counsel/>

An article about the COVID-19 vaccine, written by representatives from the General Conference Department of Health Ministries, General Conference Biblical Research Institute, and Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy and School of Public Health



# A more recent document:

- Given the ongoing disinformation and concerns regarding public health mandates, the Church released a recent document on COVID-19 vaccines.

<https://adventist.news/news/reaffirming-the-seventh-day-adventist-churchs-response-to-covid-19-1>



What does the Church say about  
COVID-19 vaccines?

***The Church views the current  
Pandemic as a Public Health Crisis***



# What does the Church say about COVID-19 vaccines?

“The global upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has generated considerable speculations related to end-time events and misinterpretations of the Bible. One recent view, propagated through social media and some internet websites, has put forward the theory that the vaccines produced to combat COVID-19 belong to a process of control that will lead to the application of the mark of the beast.



# What does the Church say about COVID-19 vaccines?

*“It should be noted, however, that Adventists hold to the conviction that the end-time controversy will center on the law of God, and particularly on the fourth commandment (Rev 14:12). Moreover, the third angel’s message will warn against the reception of the mark (Rev 14:9 - 11) and will enlighten humankind as to the issues involved.*



# What does the Church say about COVID-19 vaccines?

***“For this reason, it should be made clear that Seventh-day Adventists understand the ‘mark of the beast’ to be not a literal mark but a sign of allegiance that identifies the bearer as loyal to the power represented by the beast.*”**



# What does the Church say about COVID-19 vaccines?

“From a distinct perspective, another speculative view argues that vaccines make those who take them unclean because, supposedly, unclean substances are used to produce them. In this regard, *it should be clarified that the abiding biblical instructions forbidding the consumption of unclean food and blood (Lev 11:1 - 20; 17:11 - 12; Acts 15:20) do not apply to vaccines for the obvious reason that vaccines are produced as medication to save lives, not to serve as food.*”



# Current Science on the vaccines

- A number of vaccines approved by the World Health Organization
- Vaccines with an efficacy above 50 % have been helpful, significantly reducing deaths from COVID-19
- With rare exceptions, fully immunized individuals don't land in ICU and do not die from the disease
- Immunized individuals have a lower risk of transmitting COVID-19 virus although this increases with variants
- Current vaccines offer some protection even in the cases of variants, albeit at sometimes lower efficacy depending on strains



# Current Science on the vaccines

- There can be side effects, mostly of a minor degree, and there has been a very small number of deaths directly linked with the vaccine.
- The *benefits* of being vaccinated far outweigh the *risks* of vaccination; 6,3 million have already perished in the pandemic (Over 513 million cases of COVID-19 worldwide so far)
- More than 11.3 billion doses of vaccine have been administered
- Deaths and severe illness case numbers are dropping dramatically in countries where vaccine rollout has already widely occurred (Israel, UK, USA)



# Conclusions

Immunization, along with sanitation and clean water, has been foundational to the improved longevity seen around the world where these interventions have been applied.

***Vaccines have long been used by Adventist church members throughout the world. Along with good health practices, they have provided protection against many infections and prevented illness and death.***



# Conclusions

As we witness the global magnitude of the pandemic, the deaths, disability, and long-term COVID-19 effects that are emerging in all age groups, ***we are encouraging our members to consider responsible immunization and the promotion and facilitation of the development of what is commonly termed herd immunity*** (pre-existing community immunity of approximately 80 percent of individuals as a result of previous infection and/or vaccination).

**Note: Encouraging – not mandating!**



# Conclusions

***“THE DECISION TO BE IMMUNIZED OR NOT IS THE CHOICE OF EACH INDIVIDUAL, AND SHOULD BE TAKEN IN CONSULTATION WITH ONE’S HEALTH-CARE PROVIDER. PERSONAL RESEARCH ON THE SUBJECT IS IMPORTANT. WE ULTIMATELY RELY ON FOLLOWING BIBLICAL HEALTH PRACTICES AND THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, AND FOLLOWING GOD’S LEADING IN OUR LIVES, WHICH WILL BRING US PEACE AND ASSURANCE IN OUR DECISION-MAKING.”***

***<https://adventist.news/news/reaffirming-the-seventh-day-adventist-churchs-response-to-covid-19-1>***



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# Will we all agree on the way forward

- There are real fears and questions
- We need to listen to each other
- We need to *hear* each other
- We need to be respectful of one another
- We should not vilify or stigmatize each other



- W. C. White remembered “as a child I was perfectly healthy until I was vaccinated and by that my health was much impaired. Mother listened attentively to the arguments that the methods of vaccination had been improved and when in our travels we were brought to a large city where smallpox was raging and the matter was discussed as to whether or no (sic) that I and my associates should be vaccinated, she offered no objection. . . . I and my associates were vaccinated.” (W. C. White to L. C. Kellogg, February 5, 1924, Q and A 34-E-2). As I’m sure you know, the use of contaminated vaccination material resulted in complicating infections as Trall was observing. W. C. White seems to be expressing that his mother used reason and common sense to evaluate the danger earlier on and the probable benefit later regarding the Smallpox vaccination.

Merlin D. Burt, Director

Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.



# In 1931 D. E. Robinson indicated that even Ellen White received a vaccination against smallpox.

- You will be interested to know however, that at the time when there was an epidemic of smallpox in the vicinity, she herself was vaccinated and urged her helpers, those connected with her, to be vaccinated. In taking this step Sister White recognized the fact that it has been proven that vaccination either renders one immune from smallpox or greatly lightens its effects if one does come down with it. She also recognized the danger of their exposing others in they failed to take this precaution. Robinson, who had been a missionary in Africa, remembered that at their mission, “Smallpox was all about us and got into the school. After the students were vaccinated, we had not another case, and in no case did we see any ill results.”<sup>1</sup>

1. D. E. Robinson to Clarence Hocker, June 12, 1931, EGWE.



# *American Sentinel* – Forerunner of *Liberty Magazine* - Editorial in 1896

The editors quoted a prominent law professor of the day as follows: “It is settled that the State may compel an unwilling citizen to be vaccinated. But on what ground? No[t] because if he remains unvaccinated, he would be liable to catch the smallpox; nor yet because if he did catch it, he would probably die; but solely because his unvaccinated condition renders him specially liable to become a source of contagion to others.” (11) The editors went on to contrast this rare instance of allowable state force in health matters to other instances where my choice would not impact others, such as, most importantly for him, Sabbath and Sunday-keeping.



# 1918-1919 Influenza Response – Natural Remedies and Vaccines

“Vaccines have an important use, for while they may not prevent an attack of influenza, they do much to diminish the more important complications. Plenty of sleep and physical exercise are essential as preventive measures.”

September 4, 1919, *The Advent Review  
and Sabbath Herald* (1147) 27



# Missionaries, Vaccines, and Presumption - 1937

Qualifications of a Missionary by W.H. Anderson

“He must be vaccinated for smallpox, typhoid, and many other ailments, for which there are vaccines. He must not expect God to work a miracle in caring for him when he neglects the means that God has given him for his protection.”

Vol. 114, No. 33 *The Advent Review  
and Sabbath Herald* 15, 1937



# Misunderstanding of Spirit of Prophecy guidance on “drugs.”

New Remedies for Old Diseases  
By T. R. Flaiz, M.D.

January 15, 1953 R & H

Because of the wording of these admonitions, many of our people came to classify everything that comes from a drugstore in a bottle, in a hypodermic ampule, or anything that is dispensed in any prescription as drugs; and as drugs it must be classified as under the condemnation of the Spirit of prophecy. Many have gone to such lengths as to condemn vaccines, anti-toxins, and other extremely valuable life-saving agencies—agencies that have practically cleared the world of once-tragic plagues such as smallpox, typhoid, typhus, and bubonic plague.



# Immunization Is Important

## By H. O. Swartout, M.D. - 1955

“In Proverbs 22:3 and 27:12 we are twice told in the same words that ‘a prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.’ This statement might well be taken as Biblical advice or authority for the whole modern program of immunization.”

August 18, 1955



# The Use of Drugs Part 4 – Dec. 5, 1957 – General Conference Leaders

Shall We Follow Sentiment or Mature Reason?

“Let us notice briefly the question of vaccines and antitoxins, simple preparations of dead germs or greatly weakened strains of live germs. To some it seems objectionable to think of injecting these products into our body, perhaps to flow through our bloodstream.



# The Use of Drugs Part 4 – Dec. 5, 1957 – General Conference Leaders

What dramatic portrayals of this procedure are heard from those with little understanding of the life-and-death questions involved. But there are certain facts that must be faced. Shall I as a parent give my child diphtheria inoculations, or shall I take upon my broad but ignorant shoulders the responsibility for the possibility of his tragic death months later?”



# The Use of Drugs Part 4 – Dec. 5, 1957 – General Conference Leaders

“Shall we teach the national people of various foreign countries not to be vaccinated, not to be inoculated against bubonic plague, laying them open to this very real danger? The vaccination at worst is uncomfortable, the inoculation against plague scarcely that, and neither has any serious or permanent ill effects. The dis-eases that they ward off are often fatal. Some will say, Why not try natural remedies? If, by this, hydro-therapy is meant, there is no hydro-therapy or other physical therapy that can stop the plague in its swift, deathly stroke, which may be over in a few hours.”



# The Use of Drugs Part 4 – Dec. 5, 1957 – General Conference Leaders

“Certain countries or areas, formerly for good reason labeled “the white man's grave,” have, because of these protective inoculations, been rendered relatively safe, not only for the Occidental, but also for the local people. Would we withhold from these dedicated Christian missionaries this protection that enables them to go into dangerous, disease-ridden areas, accomplish their mission, and return again? As such protection is required by law, these missionaries obviously could not even proceed to these foreign shores without such protection, were they so ill-advised as not to accept it.”



# Vexed, Vaxed, and Vehement...

- Community immunity is vital if we are to see an end to the pandemic
- Could it be that *responsible immunization* includes our responsibility to protect one another, and not only ourselves?
- May the Lord guide us as we make our choices – to His honor and glory



Beloved, I pray that you may prosper  
in all things and be in health,  
just as your soul prospers.

3 John 2, NKJV

Wishing you *Shalom* in the Sozo  
dispensation, if you will!



# Additional recent resources:

<https://adventist.news/news/reaffirming-the-seventh-day-adventist-churchs-response-to-covid-19-1>

Theological perspectives by Dr. Jiri Moskala:

<https://www.healthministries.com/vaccination-biblical-theological-reflection/>

Spirit of Prophecy perspectives:

<https://whiteestate.org/about/issues/vaccinations/>



- <https://www.healthministries.com/coronavirus/>  
COVID-19 advice and information from General Conference Health Ministries
- <https://www.adventist.org/articles/immunization/>  
Immunization information; links to more specific information about COVID-19 vaccines
- <https://www.healthministries.com/celebrations/>  
Lifestyle program and information available for free download
- <https://adventistbookcenter.com/boost-your-immune-system-using-god-natural-remedies.html>  
Four key strategies to lower your risk of chronic and infectious disease. By Donald R. Hall, DrPH, CHES



# Disclaimer

*The information shared is intended to be informational, not intended to replace or to be applied as definitive treatment. Please consult with your regular healthcare provider regarding your personal diagnosis, treatment and care.*



# Fetal Cells and Vaccines

- An often-asked question relates to the use of fetal stem cell lines used for culturing the viruses in the production of some vaccines. These fetal cells were harvested from two aborted fetuses in the early 1960's and the same cells have been propagated using special processes to keep the supply available without having again to harvest fibroblast stem cells. This process was first used in the production of a vaccine against rubella; by 2005, rubella had been eliminated from the USA. Cell progeny from those original cells is still being used today. Retinal cells were harvested from an aborted fetus in 1985; cells from this source were used in the production of the J&J COVID-19 vaccine.*



# Fetal Cells and Vaccines(cont.)

- Importantly, the Adventist Church does not condone abortion. Many lives have been saved through the judicious use of vaccines. Adventists continue to advocate for vaccines to be produced ethically. We also support the saving of life and maintenance of herd immunity through responsible vaccination practices. A huge price was paid in the early 1960s. Since then, many lives have been saved. Various religions such as Roman Catholicism and Judaism have registered their disapproval of the initial harvesting process but have encouraged the use of vaccines among their adherents to prevent illness and to save life. The Adventist Church has clearly articulated its biblical stance on abortion as noted; we also encourage responsible immunization to save life and prevent illness.*

