

Parental attitudes and beliefs about vaccines:

Side effects of a vaccination campaign against hepatitis B

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We evaluate the impact of a French vaccination campaign against hepatitis B (HB) that took place in 1994. We show that this political measure created an exogenous shock on vaccination behaviors, increasing the vaccination rate against HB for children aged 11 and above. Using a regression discontinuity design, we evaluate the impact of vaccination against HB on various outcomes. We find that, rather than reassuring parents about vaccination benefits, this vaccination scheme, through an increase in vaccination against HB, led to a decline in knowledge about the mode of transmission, a drop in vaccination confidence and, more importantly, a drop in measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccination rate. The effect on MMR vaccination was relatively unexpected and may imply a negative externality. Indeed, measles is an extremely contagious disease. If the vaccination rate falls, the disease will spread further, raising the question of the net effect of the HB vaccination campaign on the population well-being.