

From The Heart Of One Mother to Another

by Christine Colebeck

Today is my daughter's sweet 16th birthday but we will not be celebrating. Instead I will light a candle and when I blow it out I will make a wish in my daughter's memory. My wish is for all mothers worldwide, that you will educate yourselves and that you make informed choices so that you may prevent unnecessary tragedy and be spared from my pain.

LAURA'S STORY

After 41 weeks of pregnancy, on July 27th 1986, a perfect and healthy little baby Laura Marie made her entrance into the world. We were welcomed home by family and friends anxiously waiting to meet the new family member. They showered her with so many beautiful, little tiny, pink dresses, we joked that she would never be able to wear them all in one lifetime.

Our lives changed completely and now revolved around stroller walks in the park, visiting friends, changing diapers, night feedings and shopping for more little pink dresses. We were parents now; we had a family and life was absolutely perfect.

I took Laura for several baby check-ups at the pediatrician. She was a kind and gentle older woman. At age 3 months old, the pediatrician was very pleased with Laura's development and weight gain, and vaccinated her with DPT and OPV. I didn't even question her. I knew that all my friend's babies had this same vaccine and "all good mothers" vaccinated their children to protect them. I left the pediatrician's office and walked home. Laura was very fussy, which was unusual.

She was crying loudly all the way home, in the stroller. When we got home, I realized she had urinated so heavily she wet everything in the stroller. Then her cry turned into screaming and she developed a fever. Her leg was very swollen, red and felt hot. I called the pediatrician who told me this was "normal" and to give her baby Temptra. I gave her baby Temptra and felt better that the pediatrician had assured me this was normal.

Laura continued to scream and I could no longer console her. My every instinct told me this was not normal but I was young with my first child and trusted the doctor. I could not hold Laura in my arms because she screamed louder as any movement of her leg seemed to cause her terrible pain. I put her in the swing and she cried herself to sleep. I was so relieved; the Temptra was working and the doctor must have been right. I began to feel silly for all my worrying. A short time later, Laura woke up screaming and spent the evening screaming and sleeping on and off.

She had no appetite and nothing made her stop crying. Finally it was bedtime and she cried in

her crib, until she fell asleep. She had never cried herself to sleep before and I felt very bad for letting her but if I held her, she screamed louder. My husband came home from work and I told him about everything that had happened that day. Laura was sleeping soundly in her crib and we were both relieved that she seemed to be feeling better and decided not to worry.....

I should have worried.

In the morning I awoke and was startled to realize my husband had slept in for work. I immediately knew something was wrong, and the worry from the previous night came rushing back to me. I quickly ran to her crib, with a feeling of dread. She did not look right. I closed my eyes tight and opened them again, and considered the possibility that this was a dream but when I opened my eyes she looked dead.

I went into shock and after that, much of this day remains a blur. I touched her and she was very warm. I screamed for my husband to call 911. I watched as he performed CPR; my body was frozen and I couldn't move. He tried to revive our child to no avail. He was shouting for me to open the door for the paramedics. I was temporarily jolted back to reality and I went and opened the door. I could now move but couldn't speak.

I just stood there numbly shaking my head, feeling completely helpless as dozens of paramedics, police and firemen rushed past me into our home. I didn't cry, and I wanted to scream at them to leave her alone but I couldn't speak. She was on the floor and they were shocking her tiny body, in the little bedroom with the yellow painted walls and clown wallpaper. I stood there praying in my head that they would just leave her alone, that they would get out of her bedroom and that I would wake up from this horrible dream.

Then I heard someone saying there was a faint pulse and I suddenly felt hopeful. She was rushed from the house in an ambulance. It was then that the homicide detectives led us into another room and the interrogation began.

They decided that my husband and I needed to be questioned in separate rooms. I immediately realized they suspected that we had done this to our child. We all know that perfect children do not suddenly die, for no reason. I was silent - I had already decided in my own mind that this was somehow all my fault and although I wasn't quite sure what I had done to kill her, I was convinced that I had somehow caused this to happen. Perhaps I was being punished by G-d for a sin, or perhaps, it happened because I had let her cry herself to sleep that night. The fact remained that my child was dead and "good mother's" do not have dead children.

My husband began to protest loudly about the line of questioning and he demanded we be taken immediately to the hospital, to see our child. The detectives finally took us to the hospital and put us in the "bad news room" and the doctor came and insisted we sit down, before he spoke to us. He began telling us that they had tried this and that and then finally he said the words that would echo in my ears for a lifetime: "She is dead."

The pediatrician whom I so respected and adored broke down and cried when I gave her the news on the phone. She went back and forth, defending the vaccine that she was told was safe, and then blaming it for killing my child and those who told her it was safe. She then told me that she also had

another patient, an infant boy, die after this same vaccination.

Then the detectives took us home for more questions, often repeating the same questions several times until they grew tired of asking them. The questions constantly centered around our involvement. Then they searched the house and checked for signs of forced entry. My husband repeatedly told them, that he thought the vaccine had killed our child and told them over and over about her unusual behavior from the time she was vaccinated. Everyone we knew arrived at our house. I made coffee and tidied the house, like it was any other day and we were having "guests". Shock is a strange and wonderful thing and of course you don't know you are in it.

My parents finally insisted on taking me to their house for a few days, while my husband and his friends had the horrendous task, of packing up the nursery because I couldn't stand to look at it any longer. The room I had so lovingly made was now empty and a source of great pain.

Several days later, after the funeral and the tiny white coffin that was so small my husband carried it alone, I finally came out of shock and allowed myself to cry. It was a river. I cried for all the things I would never do with my daughter. All the ballet classes I would never take her to, the wedding I would never attend, the grandchildren I would never know and all the dreams I would never realize with her. I cried for all that was and all that would never be. There was an emptiness inside of me that threatened to swallow me up whole, as I fell into the depths of grief during the darkest days of my life.

The detectives eventually became satisfied, that we had not harmed our daughter in any way and the investigation into her death ended. We were then left without answers.

The doctors did not want to talk about her death being related in any way to the vaccine and one after the other, refused to answer our many questions. I was repeatedly told that vaccines were for "the greater good." I was even told that loss of life through immunization was "expected" in the war against disease, but these losses were considered to be at "acceptable" levels. However, this did not feel very acceptable or good to me as a mother with empty arms that ached for my child. The coroner finally told us months later that the cause of death was determined to be "SIDS" (sudden infant death syndrome) meaning "no known cause" and refused to release a copy of the autopsy report to us.

It took almost a year for us to obtain this report and to our great horror, we realized that the autopsy summary was copied directly from the vaccine product monograph under the heading "Contraindications" as follows... "Sudden infant death syndrome has been reported following administration of vaccines containing diphtheria, tetanus toxoids, and pertussis vaccine. However, the significance of these reports is not clear. One common factor is the age where primary immunization was done between the age of 2 to 6 months, a period where most sudden infant death syndromes are found to occur with a peak incidence being at 2 to 4 months."

There was no toxicology testing performed and the pediatrician never filed an adverse vaccine reaction report with health authorities. I later learned that most vaccine-induced deaths in this country are listed as SIDS, and that SIDS statistics are NOT included in vaccine adverse reaction data, even if a child dies only a few hours after receiving inoculation. This data is presented to physicians and the public to reassure them that vaccines are safe.

The government's own literature advises that there has been little or no testing in the area of vaccine safety or efficacy. Essentially, our children are the test. According to their literature, immunization is “the most cost effective” way to prevent disease. Nowhere in their literature does it claim to be the safest. We are trading our children's lives to save the government money. We are told that the benefits outweigh the risks but many of the diseases that we vaccinate for are not even life threatening; however the vaccine itself has the potential to kill. Vaccines kill at a much higher rate than we are led to believe. We play vaccine roulette with our children's lives and we never know which child will fall victim next.

If the odds are 1 in 500,000 for death, 1 in 100,000 for permanent brain injury, 1 in 1,700 for seizures and convulsions or one in 100 for adverse reaction, are you willing to take that chance? Are any odds acceptable enough to convince you to gamble with your child's life?

I can assure you that death from vaccination is neither quick nor painless. I helplessly watched my daughter suffer an excruciatingly slow death as she screamed and arched her back in pain, while the vaccine did as it was intended to do and assaulted her immature immune system. The poisons used as preservatives seeped through her tiny body overwhelming her vital organs one by one until they collapsed. It is an image that will haunt me forever and I hope no other parent ever has to witness. A death sentence considered too inhumane for this county's most violent criminals was handed down to my beautiful, innocent, infant daughter - death by lethal injection.

Today, on my daughter's birthday, I will grieve not only for the loss of my own child but for all the innocent children for which the benefits of vaccines do not outweigh the risks and are unnecessarily sentenced to death by lethal injection, under the guise of “the greater good.” The true war is not against disease; we have somehow become our own worst enemy by putting our faith in science instead of nature. Today, I call on all mothers across the world to join me in putting an end to this senseless slaughter of our most precious resource, our children.

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