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[Why does the headline says measles deaths when it is measles VACCINE deaths?]

[Measles deaths in Lucknow: Health Ministry orders an inquiry](#)

[NDTV Correspondent](#), Updated: August 22, 2010

Lucknow: The Health Ministry has ordered a probe after four infants, all below nine months, died near Lucknow on Sunday after they were vaccinated for measles. But the inquiry team is yet to reach Uttar Pradesh. While the Uttar Pradesh government has announced compensation for the families of the victims.

All of them showed symptoms of a serious allergic reaction which probably caused their deaths.

Minutes after they were given the measles vaccine, four infants - Kumari, Sanya, Rekha and Sahil fell acutely ill. They became breathless, began to sweat and their pulse fell rapidly - all symptoms of anaphylactic shock or a serious allergic reaction to the vaccine, and before they could get medical help at the local hospital, all four had died.

"These ANM's had injected them with the measles vaccine, then some minutes later they became unconscious," said Rani, parent of a victim.

Such measles vaccine related deaths are rare but have been reported in the past. In 2008, four children died under similar circumstances in Tamil Nadu. The measles vaccination programme was suspended and the entire batch of vaccines was recalled.

Clearly, inoculation drives involving injections need strict controls and better supervision. This case raises a host of questions:

Why were the four children given the vaccine when they were all below nine months old? Measles vaccine is given at nine months

Was there proper supervision to monitor the delivery of the vaccine? Four auxiliary nurse midwives gave the shots but were not trained to provide emergency support to the infants

The crucial question is was the vial which contained the vaccine contaminated?

"We will take strict action if it is found that these were wrongly administered, we have collected samples of these doses and have sent them for testing to find out if they were genuine or spurious," said Anil Sagar, District Magistrate, Lucknow.

Paediatricians say that an immediate inquiry should begin and the entire batch be pulled out of the programme to establish the cause of death or else the vaccination programme which is doing poorly in states like Uttar Pradesh can suffer a serious setback.

The three auxiliary nurse midwives, the medical officer and the person responsible for maintaining the vaccines have also been suspended.

Read more at: <http://www.ndtv.com/article/cities/did-government-measles-drops-kill-4-children-46176?=&cb=f5cd743be624f7&relation=parent.parent&transport=fragment&type=resize&height=20?trendingnow&cp>