

## **We won't allow MMR cover-up say parents of tragic toddlers**

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in\\_article\\_id=391163&in\\_page\\_id=1770](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=391163&in_page_id=1770)

By SUE CORRIGAN, Mail on Sunday 01:01am 18th June 2006

Comments Reader comments (0)

The parents of two healthy toddlers who died ten days after being given the controversial MMR jabs have warned the Government that they will not allow the cause of their deaths to be 'covered up'.

Doctors say they cannot explain why George Fisher and Anna Duncan, both aged 17 months, died in their sleep.

But the children's parents believe that the controversial triple jab - against measles, mumps and rubella - is to blame.

Sarah and Chris Fisher, from Cheltenham, and John and Veronica Duncan, from Cardrona, Scotland, say that if British health authorities do not give them answers they will send brain tissue samples from their children's bodies to a specialist laboratory in America for analysis to determine whether the live viruses in MMR did cause the deaths.

George and Anna had been healthy toddlers when they died. Cot death has been ruled out because both children were more than a year old and blood found on Anna's lips suggested she had an epileptic-type seizure just before death which does not occur in sudden infant death syndrome

The only indications of ill-health before the children died were that both showed signs of apparently minor reactions to their MMR jabs.

George's mother, Sarah, said last week that despite repeated Government assurances the vaccine is safe, she and her husband were '100 per cent sure George was killed by MMR'.

And Anna's father, John, said he and his wife would 'never forgive themselves' for not paying privately for single jabs and for believing Government assurances that MMR was safe. They now believe that the doctors should have spotted and warned of the dangers.

Mr Duncan said that, having conducted extensive research since Anna's death, he and his wife, who is a nurse, considered it possible that their daughter had died 'as a result of a catastrophic reaction to the vaccine'.

He said: 'Six days after her jab, Anna developed purple spots on her body and bouts of high temperature.

'We read only later that these were side-effects of MMR to watch out for.

'If we had been properly warned we would have taken her for medical help sooner. But the risks of vaccines are just never mentioned.

'Anna had been exposed to an outbreak of chickenpox in our village just before her jab, which we mentioned, and had a runny nose, which means she really shouldn't have been injected with MMR at that point.

'Parents should be better informed about the risks and the choice of single jabs should be available to all parents through the NHS.'

Mrs Fisher also believed her son should not have been given the jab. George was due to have his first MMR jab in September last year but it was delayed when he developed a high temperature and, when taken to the doctor, had a convulsion in the surgery.

She said: 'It was extremely frightening, but the doctor assured me it was not uncommon, nothing to worry about, and gave him antibiotics. George soon got better, and I thought nothing further of it.

'But since his death I have learnt that if a child has any history of convulsions or fits then doctors are supposed to take that into account when administering any vaccine and watch the child more carefully for adverse

reactions.

'No one mentioned this to me when I took him along to the same surgery four months later for his MMR, and I had no idea he was at any increased risk.

'I feel very let down. I'm not against MMR, even now, but parents should be made aware of the risk factors.

'I am speaking out to warn other parents to take more care if their child shows any signs of adverse reactions.'

Since 2002 the Government has spent millions of pounds attempting to shore up public confidence in the vaccine, first undermined in 1998 when clinical researcher Dr Andrew Wakefield suggested it could cause autism and gut disease.

The failure of the Government's campaign was demonstrated last week when figures showed that because so many parents are spurning MMR, Britain is now in the grip of the biggest measles outbreak since the vaccine's introduction in 1988.

Doctors have reported hundreds of cases of measles since January in just three areas of the country, including the death of a 13-year-old boy.

Conservative health spokesman Andrew Lansley said: 'The Government's failure to maintain confidence in the MMR jab has led directly to these outbreaks.'

Opposition leader David Cameron has pledged to restore single jabs on the NHS.

Comment Add your comment Reader comments (0)

No comments have so far been submitted. Why not be the first to send us

your thoughts?