

[Usual [coincidence](#) lie.]

Baby didn't die of vaccination

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MANAMA

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HEALTH officials dismissed as untrue yesterday claims that the death of a two-month-old Bahraini boy was caused by vaccines. Syed Ali Syed Amir died a few hours after having three vaccines at the Hamad Town Health Centre, on Sunday.

But all the evidence points to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, said Primary Care and Public Health Assistant Under-Secretary Dr Mariam Al Jalahma.

"The first diagnosis of doctors at the BDF Hospital where the infant was taken by his parents, when they found him motionless in bed, was that he had died due to SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)," she said.

"They established there was no connection between the vaccines being administered and the infant's death."

Dr Al Jalahma said it was tragic coincidence that Syed Ali died few hours after he received the Penta vaccine (Combined Diphtheria-Tetanus-Acellular Pertussis (DTPa), Hepatitis B and Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine), one for the pneumococcal disease and the oral polio vaccine.

She said that when the ministry became aware that the parents of the infant were alleging that the vaccinations were responsible, officials contacted the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) of the World health Organisation (WHO) in Cairo.

"We have received a report from EMRO's WHO regional adviser, Dr Ezz Al Din Mohsini, that the vaccinations cannot be blamed, especially since the death took place shortly afterwards."

She said an Interior Ministry autopsy on the death had also said in its preliminary report that the infant could have succumbed to SIDS.

"A final report from them is awaited," said Dr Al Jalahma.

Health Ministry disease control section head, Dr Muna Al Mousawi said the vaccination stock at the Hamad Town health centre was inspected following the death and nothing untoward was found.

"More inspections are on the way at the other health centres to rule out any such issues," she said.

All vaccines in Bahrain are completely safe and approved by the WHO, said Dr Al Mousawi.

"Moreover, these are administered in the muscle and not the veins and take some time to have an effect. The only side effect is that they lead to slight increase in body temperature, after 24 hours of having been administered," she said.

In rare cases, side effects could be convulsions in adults and children due to an increase in body temperature, some people might have stomach aches and some others might have an upset stomach, said Dr Al Mousawi

Syed Ali was taken to the health centre around 10.30 am for a routine vaccination appointment and the doctor, after examining him, concluded he was ready to take the vaccination.

"The infant was taken away soon after receiving the vaccines along with his mother," said a ministry spokesman.

"At around 4pm the infant was found to be completely still and the parents rushed him to the BDF Hospital."

The spokesman said Syed Ali was declared dead by doctors there and his body sent to the SMC mortuary.

An uncle told the GDN last night that the family was convinced the vaccinations killed Syed Ali.

He was fine when he was taken to the health centre but was listless and unwell after he returned," said Mehdi Qarooni.

"We felt something was wrong at around 2pm and we took him to the BDF Hospital at around 4 pm, when we realised he was not moving."

Syed Ali's father, Syed Amer, works as a storekeeper at the Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard (Asry).

Mr Amer and his wife have two daughters, Shaimam, aged 11 and Naba, six and another son, Mohammed, three. mandeep@gn.com.bh