

## NHS Trust suspends cervical cancer vaccinations after girl, 14, dies within hours of jab

By [Daniel Martin](#)

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An NHS trust today suspended all cervical cancer vaccinations after a 14-year-old girl died hours after being given the vaccine.

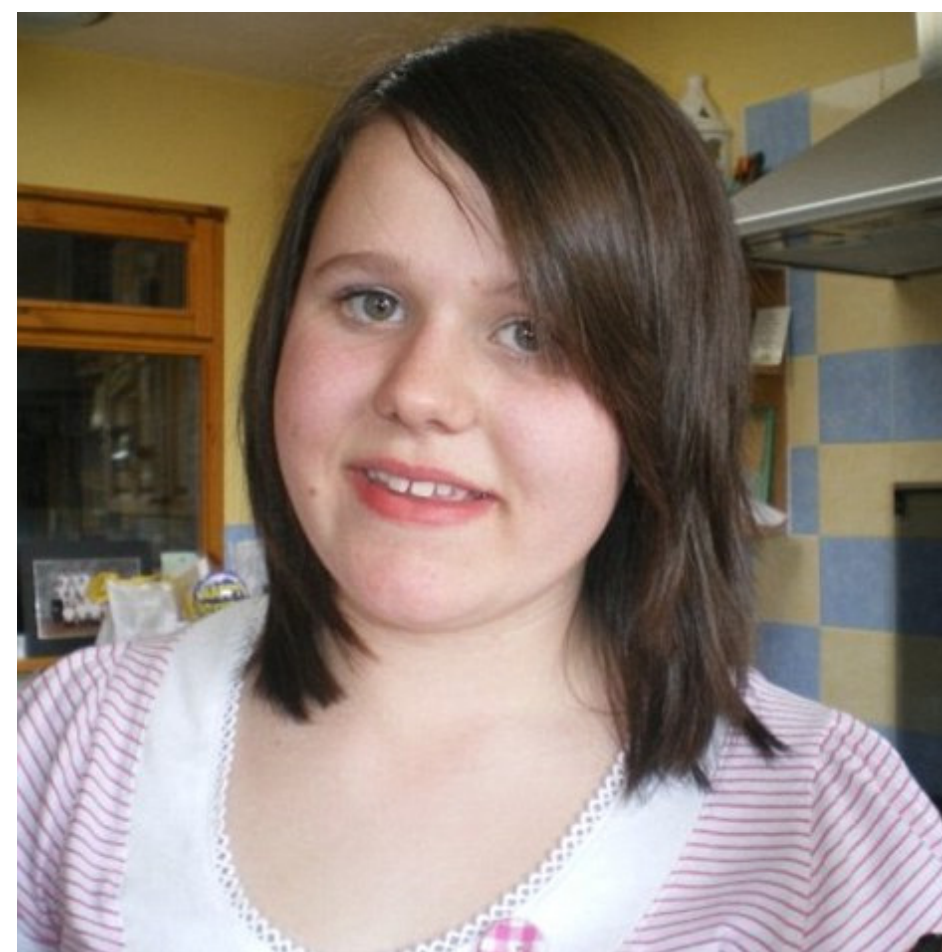
Natalie Morton, who attended the Blue Coat Church of England School in Coventry, died in hospital after receiving the Cervarix jab.

Coventry Primary Care Trust today said it had halted vaccinations for two days while an investigation into Natalie's death is carried out.

The Department of Health has refused to say whether it would still allow tens of thousands of girls across the country to receive the jab in the months ahead.

But there were calls for the entire cervical cancer vaccination programme to be suspended amid fears parents would now boycott it in the wake of Natalie's death.

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**Natalie Morton: The schoolgirl died hours after having the cervical cancer jab**



**A large wooden cross lies outside the school attended by Natalie. It is covered by messages from fellow pupils and candles**

A spokesman for Coventry Primary Care Trust said: 'An urgent investigation has been launched and while we wait for the results from the post mortem all vaccinations using the drug have been temporarily stopped'.

It is not yet known whether Natalie had an extreme - and very rare - reaction to a standard vaccine, or whether the particular dose she was given was from a rogue contaminated batch.

A number of her classmates have reported alleged side-effects from the jab.

Julie Roberts, the school's headteacher, said special assemblies would be held.

'We have all the chaplains in today to talk to the children,' she said.

'We have made provision for counselling and we have a school chaplain for every year.

'As far as the school is concerned, our thoughts and prayers are with the parents and our first priority has to be the children.

'The primary care trust are making their own investigations and we are hoping that by the end of the day we will have a clearer picture.'





**Pupils arrive at the Blue Coat Church of England School today as floral tributes to Natalie Morton are laid by the school gates**

In a letter to parents posted on the school's website, Dr Roberts said the vaccine was given to all girls eligible for the treatment.

She said: 'During the session an unfortunate incident occurred and one of the girls suffered a rare, but extreme reaction to the vaccine.'

Dr Roberts cautioned parents of girls who received the vaccine to be extra vigilant.

'The most common adverse reaction after the HPV1 vaccine is mild to moderate short-lasting pain at the injection site,' she said.

A post-mortem examination will take place to determine the exact cause of Natalie's death.

The vaccine batch used at the school has been quarantined to test whether it is faulty or was contaminated during production or distribution.

Natalie's mother Elaine, who lives with the teenager's elder sister Abigail, 17, in Coventry was too distraught to comment. Natalie's father Joe has remarried and has a baby son.



**Mourning: A member of staff at Blue Coat School, in Coventry, carries a bunch of flowers to a special assembly**

Although other girls at the school, a mixed specialist music college with 1,400 pupils, suffered from dizziness and nausea after the jab it is understood that none has needed hospital treatment.

Last night, a fellow pupil gave a dramatic account of how Natalie collapsed.

The 15-year-old girl said: 'We all had the jab today from Year Nine to the sixth form.'



**Shock: Headteacher Julie Roberts said counselling would be offered to pupils and cautioned parents of girls who had the vaccine to be extra vigilant**

'About an hour after having the jab Natalie went really pale and wasn't breathing. I think it was around lunchtime.

'She fainted in the corridor. I saw ambulance men pumping her chest then the teachers told us to go outside.

'A lot of people were crying afterwards and we were all very worried.

'We have to have three of the jabs in all and a lot of us don't want to take the rest, but they're telling us we have to because there will be side effects if we don't have them all.'

Her mother said: 'It's all very, very worrying. We feel like our children are being treated like guinea pigs.

'I wasn't keen on my daughter having it in the first place but the school seemed insistent.'

Hundreds of friends have joined a tribute site set up in Natalie's name on Facebook.

Ellen Elizabeth Slack posted: 'I'm so shocked by what has happened today.

'It feels so wrong that something that should help to avoid an illness could cause this.

'We're all thinking of you and praying for all your friends and family at this difficult time.'

Suzie Grace Gee added: 'What a lovely girl. Always had a smile on her face!

'It's such a shock to everyone, and it's going to be odd not seeing her every Sunday at church. She will forever be missed.'

Critics say the tragedy highlights the risks of mass vaccination because no testing regime can detect the rarest and potentially most lethal side effects.

Last night, there were calls for the entire cervical cancer vaccination programme to be suspended.

But the Department of Health refused to say whether it would go ahead for the tens of thousands of girls due to receive the jab in the months ahead.

The Cervarix vaccine is being given to all girls aged 12 and 13 in a nationwide programme. So far, more than 1.4million doses have been given out, and all under the age of 18 will have received it by 2011.

## **Cervarix v Gardasil**

**Cervarix was chosen for the NHS programme because it offered 'best overall value for the NHS'.**

**The vaccine, made by GlaxoSmithKline, beat off its rival Gardasil, made by Merck, for the lucrative contract last year.**

The jab is currently being offered to girls aged 12 and 13 years to protect against strains of the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is sexually transmitted and causes most cases of cervical cancer.

Both vaccines are equally effective against HPV strains, but Gardasil also protects against 90 per cent of genital warts.

However, the Department of Health secured a deal which meant a catch-up programme could be offered to older girls.

Around £100 million was earmarked for the programme involving young girls, while the two-year catch-up programme was expected to cost a further £20 million.

The NHS pays £80 a dose, plus admin and staff costs, and three jabs are given altogether.

The injection is not compulsory but parents who do not wish their girls to have it must opt out of the programme.

The vaccine guards against infection by the sexually transmitted disease HPV, which causes 70 per cent of all cases of cervical cancer.

Although the disease does not usually strike until middle age, the jab must be given to girls before they become sexually active to have the best effect.

Some critics argue it will encourage promiscuity. They say women are as well protected by regular smear tests.

The school vaccination programme followed clinical trials in 2005 on more than 18,000 women under 26.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) received 2,137 reports of suspected side effects of Cervarix between April 14, 2008 and September 23 this year.

The total number of suspected reactions is 4,657.

In total, there were 575 reports relating to side effects at the site of the injection, such as swelling and extreme pain, and another 241 allergic reactions, such as rash, swollen face and swollen lips.

A total of 455 reports were linked to 'psychogenic effects' such as nausea, panic attacks and fainting while 955 were other recognised effects like headache and sickness.

A total of 330 reports were suspected reactions not currently recognised, such as palpitations, blurred vision, chest pain and flu-like illness.

The MHRA said on September 23 that the balance of risks and benefits of Cervarix remains positive.



**Treatment: Natalie was taken to University Hospital Coventry but staff were unable to save her**

Around the world, Cervarix and another version, Gardasil, have been linked to 30 deaths as well as cases of Guillain-Barre syndrome - a little-understood immune disorder.

Dr Caron Grainger, joint director for public health for NHS Coventry and Coventry council, said: 'The incident happened shortly after the girl had received her HPV vaccine in the school.

'No link can be made between the death and the vaccine until all the facts are known and a post-mortem takes place.

'NHS Coventry has taken the proactive step to quarantine the batch of vaccine being used as a precautionary measure only and have informed the regulatory authority.

'We are conducting an urgent and full investigation into the events surrounding this tragedy.'

Dr Pim Kon, medical director at GlaxoSmithKline UK which manufactures Cervarix, said: 'Our deepest sympathies are with the family and friends of the young girl.'

'We are working with the Department of Health and MHRA to better understand this case, as at this stage the exact cause of this tragic death is unknown.'

'As a precautionary measure, the batch of vaccine involved has been quarantined until the situation is fully understood.'

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My heart goes out to this girl and her family. I am the mum of a 14 year old due her booster shortly. I googled and found a lot of concerns. Apparently in some states in America it was made compulsory for girls to have it or they were to be banned from school. Parents fought back. This from what I can see evidences the concerns that are being expressed throughout the world and is not a bad batch. If I or these girls parents had had access to this information even on the small numbers I would not have risked my daughters life or health. Please let everyone you know who has a daughter this info.

- LYNDA, France, 29/9/2009 13:44

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People are not being adequately informed about this vaccine.

It does not vaccinate against ALL HPV strains. About 30% are not covered.

HPV is caught from sexual contact yet men are not vaccinated.

Women are still required to undergo cervical screening regularly whether they have the vaccine or not as there are other causes of cervical cancer.

It is NOT a vaccine against cervical cancer, it is a vaccine against 70% of HPV viruses only.

- JB, Preston, Lancashire, 29/9/2009 13:34

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Yes! Let's be clear.

Cervical cancer is a killer, mostly caused by a virus that is sexually transmitted.

Lung cancer is a killer, mostly caused by smoking.

Question 1. - Should we educate our young in an effort to stop the habit of smoking before it starts?

Answer -Yes.

Question 2. - Should we educate our young of the dangers of early sexual activity with multiple partners, in an effort to stop the habit before it starts?

Answer? - Most parents don't think it is possible, or don't want the trouble. That's why the health authorities have had to resort to inflict this vaccination programme on the rest of us. Because of the cost of those who contract the disease, to the NHS.

Moral: prevention is better than cure

- Marilyn, Warwick, 29/9/2009 13:32

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My daughter has had two jabs of Cervarix and is not going to have the third, I wish I had researched this before she had had any jabs, the vaccine has not been tested thoroughly enough or for long enough and I would like to know what side effects she will get if she does not have the third jab, none I imagine. I do not trust anything to do with vaccines anymore and none of my family are having the swine flu jabs either. Just do your research into these vaccines and you will be shocked.

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14 is too young for girls to have sex. Use a condom if you have to and forget the jab

- Essie, Holland Park, 29/9/2009 13:29

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"It's in the best interest of 'Big Pharma' to save people's lives - if your medicines don't work, people don't buy them, and your company goes bust. The most successful pharmaceutical companies are the ones who develop effective cures and vaccines."

- Marsh, Merseyside Skeptics Society,

Your Skeptics Society seems to lack healthy skepticism. If it had done some real research, it would have found that contrary to mainstream and medical opinion, vaccines have never prevented any diseases, protected anyone, or saved anyone's life, let alone the lives of "millions".

Vaccine companies don't have to develop effective vaccines to stay in business. All they have to do to keep their racket going is to make sure that people BELIEVE that vaccines prevent diseases. Facts are irrelevant.

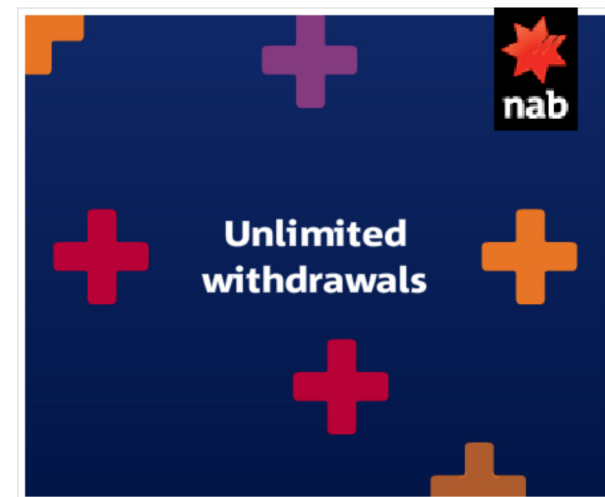
Vaccination is nothing but a 200-year-old medical superstition which has evolved into a multi-billion dollar organised criminal enterprise.

- Erwin Alber, Bangkok, Thailand, 29/9/2009 13:28

Click to rate \_\_ Rating 63

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