

Vaccination can cut rates of common infection in infants

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Rotavirus triggers potentially dangerous diarrhea, vomiting, experts say.

(HealthDay)— Rotavirus is a relatively common infection of infants and—especially in poorer countries— can cause sometimes fatal diarrhea and vomiting.

However, a new U.S. study finds that widespread vaccination against rotavirus cuts [children](#)'s rates of infection.

In the study, researchers led by Leila Sahni, immunization action plan coordinator at Texas Children's Hospital, tracked the use of the [rotavirus vaccine](#) among doctors treating children for [acute gastroenteritis](#). The study looked at cases over two years at the emergency department of Texas Children's Hospital. Just over 80 percent of the children had been vaccinated against rotavirus.

Pediatricans' use of rotavirus vaccination was classified as high coverage

(80 percent or more of their infant patients), medium coverage (40 percent to 79 percent) or low coverage (less than 40 percent).

Low-coverage patients accounted for more than 31 percent of those seen for acute gastroenteritis, compared with 13 percent for medium-coverage doctors and just under 10 percent for high-coverage pediatricians.

Overall, babies from low-coverage centers had triple the odds of contracting rotavirus compared to those from high-coverage centers, the study found.

"This shows that there is an association between not being vaccinated and getting the disease," Sahni said in a [hospital](#) news release.

Infants must receive the first dose of the oral rotavirus vaccines at their two-month visit.

"It's the only vaccine that is given by mouth, so parents should ask about it during the two-month visit if they notice that their child did not receive it," Sahni said.

The study was funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and published in the Jan. 12 issue of *Pediatrics*.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more about [rotavirus vaccination](#).

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