

Bacteria blamed in indigenous Mexican baby deaths

May 23 2015

Bacteria—and not a contaminated vaccine as initially suspected—were to blame for the recent deaths of two Mexican babies and for sickening 29 others, according to an official investigation.

The babies, from the indigenous town of Simojovel in southern Chiapas state, became sick after receiving Hepatitis B shots earlier this month.

Mexican health authorities said Friday that studies carried out on the babies detected a type of Staphylococcus bacterium that is commonly found on people's skin.

Experts concluded that "[bacterial contamination](#) occurred during the process of handling and application of the vaccine," and that this came from a single source of infection, officials from the IMSS national public [health care](#) system said in a statement.

As of Friday, two infants remained hospitalized while 27 others had been discharged.

On May 8, [health care workers](#) arrived in Simojovel to give tuberculosis and Hepatitis B vaccines. A total of 32 of the 52 children who were vaccinated had some sort of reaction, and two of them died that night.

Many [indigenous communities](#) in Chiapas, one of the poorest states in Mexico, are far from cities and lack access to health services.

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