

Mandatory vaccination ups prevalence of vaccine coverage

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(HealthDay)—Mandatory vaccination is associated with increased

vaccination coverage for measles and pertussis as well as reduced measles incidence in Europe, according to a study published online Jan. 13 in *Pediatrics*.

Olivia M. Vaz, M.P.H., from the Rollins School of Public Health in Atlanta, and colleagues used data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the World Health Organization to assess the relationship between country-level mandatory vaccination policies and measles and pertussis [vaccine coverage](#) and the annual incidence of these diseases. The associations were examined in 29 European countries.

The researchers found that mandatory vaccination was associated with a 3.71- and 2.14-percentage point higher prevalence of measles and pertussis vaccination, respectively, compared with countries that did not have mandatory vaccination. For countries without nonmedical exemptions, mandatory vaccination was associated with decreased measles incidence (adjusted incidence rate ratio, 0.14), but no significant association was identified between [mandatory vaccination](#) and pertussis incidence.

"The introduction of new mandates should be accompanied by careful surveillance of the impact on both vaccine acceptance and disease outcomes," the authors write. "Vaccine mandates shift the balance of convenience in favor of vaccination and, when accompanied by robust vaccine safety assurance and vaccine communications programs, have the potential to play a substantial role in decreasing the negative impacts of vaccine-preventable diseases."

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