The World Health Organization (WHO) inserted the vaccine hesitancy in its report as one of the ten largest global health threats. According to the organization, this revolt is dangerous because it threatens to reverse the progress achieved in combating the immunopreventable diseases, such as polio and measles. This problem, which grows every year, mobilizes parents and people in general, who do not immunize their children and themselves, causing a decrease in vaccine coverage, facilitating the entrance door for diseases still little known and putting at risk others’ lives.¹

The reasons why people opt not to vaccinate are diverse - they claim vaccines are not safe or efficient as they cause reactions, religious motives, others argue that the period between childhood vaccinations is too short and should be more spaced, they also refer that vaccines can cause autism in children and there are those who believe that it is a method of population control used by the government.²

Post-vaccination reactions are often mild and temporary, such as pain on the application site or a slight fever. Serious adverse events may occur, but are extremely rare. The child is more likely to become ill or die from immunopreventable diseases, such as meningococcal meningitis, than from a reaction to the vaccine. Thus, the benefits outweigh the risks that the vaccine may cause.³

According to data from the National Immunization Program of the Ministry of Health (NBP/MS), the goal of vaccinating 95% of intended population was not reached in recent years (2018-2017). Essential vaccines, such as Tetra Vaccine, which prevents the measles, mumps, rubella and varicella, had the lowest number of range, with 70.69% in 2017. Public health experts say that, if the Brazilian population adhered properly to vaccination, new outbreaks of measles and other eradicated diseases would not establish in the country, since there is no shortage of free vaccines.¹,⁴

Vaccination is among the main achievements of humanity and represents the investment in health with the best cost-benefit to combat infectious diseases that threatened humanity for centuries. It currently prevents approximately from two to three million deaths per year, and if the vaccine coverage was successful at world level, over 1.5 million deaths could be avoided. The manufacture of vaccines, during many years, allowed eradicating diseases such as smallpox, eliminating rubella in the Americas in the year 2015 and even measles in 2016. However, with campaigns against the immunization, there was a reversion of these achievements, which triggered new outbreaks of measles since 2018.⁵

In addition to preserving lives, these immunobiological products led to an increase of about 30 years in life expectancy of humanity, allowed a reduction in hospitalizations and decreased cost related to illness by immunopreventable pathologies. To ensure the perpetuation of these positive results, there is need for a greater reachability and participation of the population.⁶

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States has warned that if this vaccine hesitancy is not contained, the index of children who may fall ill, acquire irreversible sequelae and evolve to death will grow increasingly. Additionally, when a population ceases to be vaccinated, they enable the movement of infectious agents, undermining not only the campaign supporters, but also the population as a whole, culminating in impact on health, society and the economy in general.⁷

The importance of safety and efficacy of immunization is undisputed, but should be disclosed with more frequency, reaching the largest possible number of people, in a clear and dynamic way, facilitating the understanding of the population about the benefits and detriments of non-vaccination. To cope with the problem and minimize these global vaccine hesitancy movements, there also need for a greater commitment of health professionals to create wheels of conversation, lectures and trainings, solve doubts and provide accurate information.

¹Graduando em Enfermagem da Faculdade de Juazeiro do Norte – FJN, Ceará;
²Bolsista de Iniciação científica do Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico/CNPq;
³Docente do curso de Enfermagem da Faculdade de Juazeiro do Norte – FJN, Ceará;
⁴Pós-doutorado em Ciências da Saúde da Faculdade de Medicina do ABC – FMABC, Santo André/SP.
E-mail para contato: dayse.luz@fjn.edu.br
on these immunobiologics, establishing a bond with the population and stimulating the adherence to the practice.

REFERENCES


