**Queries and Responses: some ideas**

**To Print and Cut**

Why would I want to swallow cholera bacteria, it will make me ill.

It doesn’t help children at all.

I don’t like injections

I don’t like the idea of cholera germs in my blood.

I heard that some people who had the vaccine died from it after contracting cholera

I know a lot of people who won’t take it so why should I?

I heard of people getting cholera even after they had taken the vaccine.

I had cholera last year and recovered so there is no need for me to take the vaccine – my body can cope with cholera…

Why am I taking it but not my baby?

Why are they doing this in our district but not the one next to the capital city…?

*What’s the point of taking this when we have no cholera outbreak in our district at the moment.*

*Why do I have to have two doses, won’t one dose protect me?*

*So once I have the vaccine I will be fully protected, right?*

**Information to have to answer the questions**

*Why would I want to swallow cholera bacteria, it will make me ill.*

The vaccine uses killed bacterial cells which will not cause cholera. None has become ill with cholera from the vaccine. Sometimes there is a minor reaction to the vaccine in about 4 in 100 people who experience upset stomach, diarrhea, vomiting and nausea but these symptoms are only experienced for a short time.

*It doesn’t help children at all.*

The vaccine does help children fight the disease, but should not be given to those under one year.

*I don’t like injections*

The vaccine is not given as an injection but taken by mouth so you do not need to worry.

*I don’t like the idea of cholera germs in my blood.*

The vaccine does not go into your blood, but into your intestine where it can repel the vibrio cholerae entering your body. However, you should still follow all the guidance around preventing infection through such measures as water treatment, hand washing and food hygiene.

*I heard that some people who had the vaccine died from it after contracting cholera*

Such an occurrence has never been recorded so it is important that if this really did happen that names and locations are given so we can follow it up. It is more likely that someone had slight side effects from the vaccine. If a person died there was probably another illness involved – but we will follow up if you can give us names.

*I know a lot of people who won’t take it so why should I?*

You should encourage them to take it. The more people in a community that take it, the less vibrio cholerae will exist in that community. If half (50%) of people have had the vaccine they are already both giving themselves strong protection, but also those who have not taken, or who cannot take the vaccine. By taking the vaccine you are protecting the babies who cannot take it.

*I heard of people getting cholera even after they had taken the vaccine.*

The vaccine offers strong protection against cholera, especially if you take the two recommended doses. It is also advisable to follow protection measures such as water treatment, hand washing and food hygiene. If a vaccinated gets cholera they will not develop a severe form of the disease.

*I had cholera last year and recovered so there is no need for me to take the vaccine – my body can cope with cholera…*

This is true to a certain extent but you can still experience a serious case of cholera and by taking the vaccine you are making yourself even less likely to get the disease. In addition, by carrying out all the hygiene measures recommended as well, such as hand washing, water treatment and food hygiene you are ensuring good protection for your family.

*Why am I taking it but not my baby?*

The vaccine is not recommended for those under one year old. However, if all those who are able to take the vaccine do so, then they are contributing to the protection of your baby by reducing the vibrio cholerae in your community. In addition, please carry out all recommended hygiene practices when dealing with your baby to ensure extra protection.

*Why are they doing this in our district but not the one next to the capital city…?*

Unlike normal scheduled vaccination campaigns, OCV campaigns target areas that are considered to be cholera hotspots based on past and current outbreaks.

*What’s the point of taking this when we have no cholera outbreak in our district at the moment.*

There are two sorts of OCV campaigns some are to help fight cholera where there is an outbreak and others are preventative to stop an outbreak of cholera in the first place. If everyone takes the two doses then the protection lasts over 3 years and can allow the community to identify and put in place long term methods to prevent cholera. In addition, the vaccine offers protection against other antigens such as *Escherichia Coli* which is also a cause of diarrhea.

*I will only have to take it again next year*

No you will not have to take it again next year and there will not be an opportunity to take it next year as OCV campaigns will rarely ‘revisit’ a district and certainly not for many years. The protection if you take both doses if for between 3 and 5 years. The protection is not full and you should always follow hygiene guidelines.

*Why do I have to have two doses, won’t one dose protect me?*

You will get some protection from one dose and this is better than nothing, but it is far better to have both doses as this prolongs the protection.

*So, once I have the vaccine I will be fully protected, right?*

The vaccine needs 7 to 10 days until the onset of protection and does not offer full protection. Usually it offers 67% protection, so it is important for you and your family to continue to follow hygiene guidelines around water treatment, handwashing and food hygiene.