

Hexavalent vaccines indicator

Values and preferences

Perception of the target population on the risk of disease

Perception of the risk of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, Hib and poliomyelitis among target populations varies significantly depending on local disease prevalence, cultural beliefs and awareness levels. [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#)

For diphtheria, studies report that factual knowledge of the disease is generally low, yet the risk is often perceived as high during outbreaks or in regions with recent cases. In many high-income countries, diphtheria is considered a rare threat, leading to decreased awareness and sometimes lower perceived urgency to vaccinate. [2](#)

Perception of the risk of tetanus tends to be higher than diphtheria due to its high case-fatality and association with wounds and childbirth, especially neonatal tetanus in low-resource settings. [2](#), [3](#)

Parents of young infants and healthcare workers usually recognize pertussis as a serious illness, given its potential severity in infants. For instance, in Georgia 81% of women believed pertussis would be serious during pregnancy while 92% believed pertussis would be serious to their infants. [4](#)

For hepatitis B, awareness and perceived risk vary greatly by region. In a study among pregnant women in Uganda, perceived risk was low. [5](#)

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) disease is often under-recognized by the public, particularly in regions where widespread vaccination has nearly eliminated severe cases like meningitis and pneumonia. [3](#)

In regions where polio remains endemic, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, the public is often more aware of the disease's dangers due to its ongoing presence. However, challenges like misinformation, cultural resistance, and distrust in vaccination programs can undermine risk perception, even in high-risk areas. Conversely, in polio-free regions, the perceived risk of polio is generally low, as the disease is no longer part of the collective memory. This complacency can lead to gaps in vaccination coverage, as seen in recent outbreaks of vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) in previously polio-free countries such as the United Kingdom and Israel. [1](#), [6](#), [7](#)

Sources

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