

## INFORMED CONSENT/REFUSAL OF VITAMIN K ADMINISTRATION

Newborn infants routinely receive a vitamin K shot after birth in order to prevent (or slow) a rare problem of bleeding into the brain weeks after birth. This condition is called Hemorrhagic Disease of the Newborn. Vitamin K is naturally produced by the body but infants do not reach therapeutic levels of Vitamin K for up to two weeks after their birth. Vitamin K is a clotting factor. The fetus has low levels of vitamin K as well as other factors needed in clotting. The body maintains these levels very precisely. Supplementation of vitamin K to the pregnant mother does not change the status of the fetus, confirming the importance of its specific levels.

The problem of bleeding into the brain occurs mainly from 3 to 7 weeks after birth in just over 5 out of 100,000 births (without vitamin K injections); 90% of those cases are breastfed infants, because formulas are supplemented with unnaturally high levels of vitamin K. Forty percent of these infants suffer permanent brain damage or death.

The cause of this bleeding trauma is generally liver disease that has not been detected until the bleeding occurs. Several liver problems can reduce the liver's ability to make blood-clotting factors out of vitamin K; therefore extra K helps this situation. Infants exposed to drugs or alcohol through any means, are especially at risk. Such complications reduce the effectiveness of vitamin K, and in these cases, a higher level of available K could prevent the tragic intracranial bleeding. This rare bleeding disorder has been found to be highly preventable by a large-dose injection of vitamin K at birth.

The disadvantages of the Vitamin K administration include the fact that it is an injection and may cause discomfort, redness or swelling at the site.

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I have been given information regarding the intramuscular administration of Vitamin K to my newborn. I have had a chance to ask questions and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I have read and understood the risks involved in not administering a Vitamin K injection to my newborn and have no further questions.

**Yes**, I have chosen to have an intramuscular injection of Vitamin K administered to my newborn.

**No**, I have chosen NOT to give my newborn an intramuscular injection of Vitamin K at birth.

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**Signature**

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**Printed Name**

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**Date**