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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### Knowledge of Immunization Practices in Medical Students

The uptake and awareness of childhood immunizations has increased in the last five years. This study was carried out to assess the medical students' knowledge of immunization practices in childhood. A pre-tested, semistructured open ended questionnaire was administered to a total number of seventy eight final year medical students at the end of their pediatric clinical posting of ten weeks duration, in the Department of Pediatrics, Medical College, Baroda. The students were collected in the classroom, questions were readout to them and queries if any, were clarified.

The results of the study that most of the students had correct knowledge about immunization schedule, doses and side effects of vaccines used in the National Immuniza-

**TABLE I—Knowledge of Immunization Practices**  
(n = 78)

Knowledge	Correct response	
	No.	Percentage
Immunization schedule	58	74.4
Dose & route	53	67.9
Side effects	53	67.9
Contraindications to different vaccines	41	52.6
Vaccine handling and cold chain	25	32.1
Sterilization techniques	28	35.9

tion Programme (*Table I*). However, only nearly a one-third of these students had correct knowledge of vaccine handling and cold chain and sterilization techniques. Basic knowledge about the National Immunization Programme has been found inadequate by other workers also(1).

The teaching of medical students must stress upon to improve their practical abilities and to meet community health goals, including the National Immunization Programme. This may be re-inforced by providing active learning opportunities and reorientation of instructional programmes so that professional skills and attitudes receive same attention as biomedical knowledge(2).

U.S. Naik,  
N. Shendurnikar,  
*Department of Pediatrics,  
Medical College,  
Baroda 390 001.*

### REFERENCES

1. Tajeja DK, Bhatia MS, Singhal PK, Hem Bala. Undergraduate medical education—outcome. *Indian J Med Ed* 1989, 28: 39-44.
2. Report of World Conference on Medical Education. *Indian J Med Ed* 1988, 27: 4-23.

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### Branding—A Prevalent Harmful Practice in Neonatal Care

Branding or inflicting burn over the body is a dangerous harmful practice and has been reported from different parts of India for treatment of convulsions(1),