

INTRODUCTION

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Vaccine preventable diseases still represent horrible danger to infants special in developing countries. World health organization (WHO) and expanded programme on immunization (EPI) in the worldwide focuses on the seven vaccine preventable diseases which are causes morbidity and mortality by itself or associated complications for example pertussis (whooping-cough) kills about 350,000 infant per year, measles kills 1.1 million per year, tetanus kills at least 500,000 per year and hepatitis "B" kills about 800,000 per year. Immunization against seven vaccine preventable diseases (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, measles and Hepatitis "B" virus) has saved about million of children annually from deaths and disability (*WHO, 1999*).

Immunization of infants and children has been practiced for a long time in Egypt where in 1958, immunization was organized by low and in the last decade, Egypt made great effort to meet the world challenge of universal child immunization (*UNICEF, 1990*). In 1977 the world health organization (WHO) puts a goal of universal child immunization, this goal can be achieved if at least 80% of the children are immunized against the childhood vaccine preventable diseases (*WHO, 1990*).

The Egyptian Ministry of Health's efforts through the accelerated expanded program on immunization (EPI) during a critical ten year period from 1984 to 1994 that have achieved dramatic results in universal childhood immunization coverage and large reductions in childhood preventable disease incidence and deaths (*Mansour, 1994*).

Vaccines	Percent coverage		Percent increase in coverage
	1984	1994	
OPV3	67	91	36
TT2+	19	64	237
Measles	41	90	120
DPT3	57	90	58
BCG	53	95	79

Table (1)

Vaccine coverage rate in children less than five years of age, Egypt, 1984 and 1994 (*Mansour, 1994*).

Rural health services are covered by WHO services that are extended to the majority of the rural population these services goal is to increase vaccination coverage in the rural areas. Many factors are important for the success of the immunization program, among those which are proper knowledge of the mothers and nurses about vaccination, that any where wrong knowledge or malpractice can lead to failure of proper immunization (*Maclaren, 1994*).

Community health nurses are instrumental in all factes of prevention and promotion of infant's health through immunization plans are devised to protect infants from identified preventable diseases to decrease morbidity and mortality, the community health nurses are the key to implementation and success of these plans, proving again their importance in the community. The community health nurses must be knowledgeable about vaccine preventable diseases so that they can effectively counsel mothers about the care of potentially exposed or infected infant (*Stanhope, 1992*).