Deaths from Vaccine-Preventable Diseases


* About 2.5 million of the 10.5 million deaths worldwide per year in this age group are caused by diseases for which vaccines are available.
† Other vaccine-preventable diseases: diphtheria, hepatitis B, Japanese encephalitis, meningococcal disease, polio, and yellow fever.
For Further Reflection

1. Which three diseases in the chart result in the greatest number of deaths in children under age five years? What percentage of total deaths does each of those diseases cause?
   - Pneumococcal Diseases: 28%
   - Measles: 21%
   - Rotavirus: 16%

2. The World Health Organization recommends the following vaccines universally: polio, diphtheria, yellow fever, tetanus, pertussis, Hemophilus influenzae type B (also called Hib), and measles. Which one of these diseases causes the largest percentage of deaths?
   - Measles

3. If 2.5 million deaths are caused annually in children less than five years of age by diseases for which vaccines are available, approximately how many deaths are due to the measles?
   \[ 0.21 \times 2.5 \text{ million} = 525,000 \text{ deaths} \]

4. Access to vaccines is limited for many young children globally. What kind of ethical issues does this fact raise?
   - Limited access to vaccines for some young children raises issues of fairness. The benefits resulting from vaccines are available only to some children and not others. Also, children in some areas of the world suffer more harm from contracting vaccine-preventable diseases than children in other areas.