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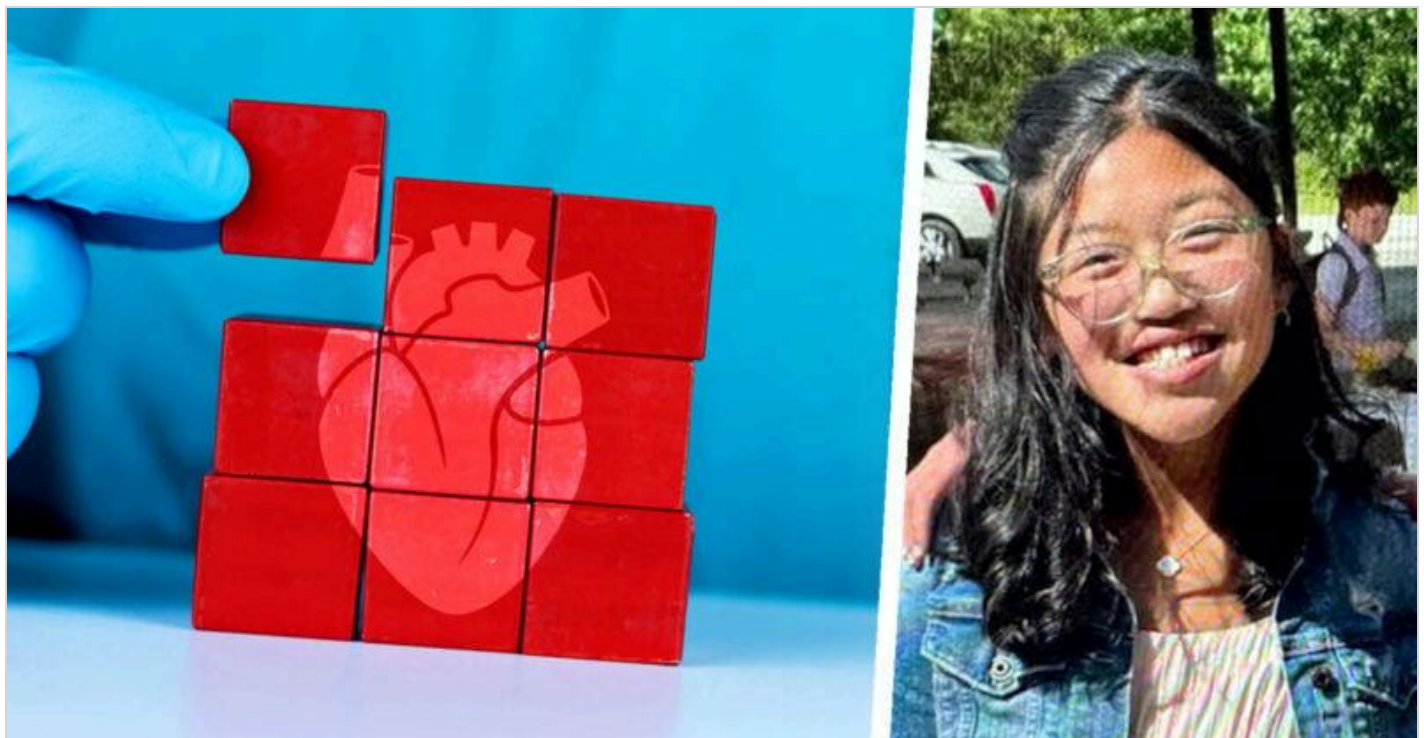
HEALTH CONDITIONS

Hospital Won't Put Child on Heart Transplant List Unless Parents Agree to COVID, Flu Shots

Cincinnati Children's Hospital will not put a 12-year-old girl on its heart transplant list unless she takes the COVID-19 and flu vaccines, according to her family. The child has been receiving treatment at the hospital for two serious heart conditions since her adoption at age 4.

by **Brenda Baletti, Ph.D.**

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Cincinnati Children's Hospital will not place a 12-year-old girl on its heart transplant list because of her **vaccination status**, according to her family.

Adaline, the adopted daughter of Jeneen and Brayton Deal, has had two heart conditions — **Ebstein anomaly** and **Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome** — since birth. She has been receiving treatment for the **condition** at Cincinnati Children's since she was adopted at age 4.

Jeneen, who is related by marriage to Vice President JD Vance's half-siblings, told Children's Health Defense (CHD) General Counsel Kim Mack Rosenberg that they knew since adopting Adaline that she would eventually need a heart transplant.

Now that she has grown, the Ebstein anomaly, a congenital heart defect that affects valve functioning and can lead to heart failure, has become severe.

"The right side of her heart is very sick," Jeneen told Mack Rosenberg during an episode of "**Good Morning, CHD.TV.**" "It's barely even pumping blood."

The family had hoped to continue Adaline's treatment at Cincinnati Children's, which they consider the best hospital in the area, Jeneen said. However, the hospital refused to place her on the transplant list unless she took the **COVID-19** and **flu vaccines**.

The hospital, which **requires** transplant patients to be vaccinated, declined to make an exemption after the family explained the vaccinations conflict with their religious beliefs as nondenominational Christians and their medical beliefs, Jeneen told the **Cincinnati Enquirer**.



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The hospital indicated it follows the guidelines from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Jeneen said.

"They told us that we can basically find another hospital because they will not change their policy," Jeneen said. "I'm terrified she's going to die while we're trying to fight this."

Jeneen said the family's insurance limits which hospitals they can go to and that Cincinnati Children's is a great hospital, so they would prefer to stay there.

Ohio Advocates for Medical Freedom (OAMF) which has issued a **call to action for Adaline**, said on its website that Adaline's story is not an isolated one.

OAMF wrote:

"Families across Ohio, including the **Donaldson family in Cleveland**, have faced similar vaccine status discrimination. These tragic situations highlight a critical issue: Ohio's legislature has repeatedly failed to pass legislation to protect families like Adaline's from being denied care based on vaccine choices."

OAMF President Stephanie Stock said in an interview that it is "astounding" that even members of the family of the vice president of the U.S. face vaccine status discrimination. It is proof, she said, that vaccine status discrimination can extend to everyone.

The organization is advocating for **Ohio House Bill 319**, which would end vaccine status discrimination in the state. After learning of Adaline's case, OAMF plans to add a special provision to the bill to protect children.

The hospital **did not make its transplant policy available** to the Enquirer. Although the family's doctor there reportedly told them the hospital's vaccine requirement followed recommendations by the NIH, a spokesperson for the agency told the Enquirer that it does not make recommendations about **vaccines** for transplants.

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Network for Hope, which works with transplant centers across the Midwest, told the Enquirer that transplant centers set their own vaccine requirements.

Cincinnati Children's on Wednesday issued a statement **responding to the controversy**, the Enquirer reported. **The statement** did not directly mention Adaline's case, but said organ transplants are very complicated and hearts available for transplants are rare.

"Our responsibility is to ensure that every donated organ is used in a way that maximizes successful outcomes for children in need," it said, adding:

"Because children who receive a transplant will be immunosuppressed for the rest of their life, vaccines play a critical role in preventing or reducing the risk of life-threatening infections, especially in the first year. These decisions involve discussion between our providers and the patient's family."

Watch Jeneen Deal CHD.TV interview here:



Brenda Baletti, Ph.D.

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