

Cori Hansen still isn't sure if her kids will get the swine flu vaccine.

"I think for my daughter who's in school it's definitely worth thinking about, for her. Maybe in the future," she said. When asked if she'd head to a clinic Thursday, the response was "It might be a phone call to my doctor tonight."

Like so many parents, Cori isn't sure if the vaccine is safe. Now, there's another issue: If she does choose the shots, she'll have to decide if her kids get the swine flu shot with mercury, or the special dose without mercury. Lee County Health Department Director Dr. Judith Hartner acknowledged at a press conference, "There's a lot of controversy as to whether it is a cause to autism."

Just search mercury and autism on the internet, and you'll find plenty. On the EPA website, experts tell you mercury "can be harmful to children." Thimerosal is a preservative used for vaccines, including the H1N1, that contains small amounts of mercury.

Four In your corner called Tampa Surgeon Dr. Joseph Diaco, who's working to get thimerosal out of all shots. "If it were my children or grandchildren," he said, "I would not give them any vaccine, or swine flu vaccine that contains mercury." He also said mercury, and the form of it used in thimerosal is a "neuro toxin."

"Repeated and well done research has made it clear that there is no link between childhood vaccines and autism," said Dr. Hartner about the debate.

According to the FDA's website, a link between the mercury and autism is weak at best. But, the agency does urge vaccine manufacturers to eliminate the preservative until more research can be done. So if you're headed to the swine flu clinics, remember, you have a choice.

Mom Cori says she will get the vaccine, after consulting her children's pediatrician.

"Better to be safe, than not," when it comes to the swine flu.

If you want the doses without mercury., those will be the nasal doses. According to health officials, there are limited non-mercury doses available.

The clinics began today, and will continue in intervals at area high schools. For a complete list of locations and hours, [click here](#).