

Vaccine Safety

CDC Vaccine Safety Common Concerns



Vaccine Safety

Specific Vaccines

Common Concerns

Adjuvants

Autism

CDC Statement: 2004 Pediatrics
Paper on MMR and Autism

Fainting (Syncope)

Febrile Seizures

Guillain-Barre Syndrome

Multiple Vaccines and the Immune
System

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
(SIDS)

Thimerosal in Vaccines

Vaccines During Pregnancy

Frequently Asked Questions about
Vaccine Recalls

Historical Vaccine Safety Concerns

Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that is caused by differences in how the brain functions. People with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in different ways. Recent estimates from CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network found that about 1 in 59 children have been identified with ASD in communities across the United States. CDC is committed to providing essential data on ASD, searching for causes of and factors that increase the risk for ASD, and developing resources that help identify children with ASD as early as possible.

There is no link between vaccines and autism.

Some people have had concerns that ASD might be linked to the vaccines children receive, but studies have shown that there is no link between receiving vaccines and developing ASD. In 2011, an Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on eight vaccines given to children and adults found that with rare exceptions, these vaccines are very safe.

A 2013 CDC study [PDF - 204 KB] added to the research showing that vaccines do not cause ASD. The study looked at the number of antigens (substances in vaccines that cause the body's immune system to produce disease-fighting antibodies) from vaccines during the first two years of life. The results showed that the total amount of antigen from vaccines received was the same between children with ASD and those that did not have ASD.

Vaccine ingredients do not cause autism.

One vaccine ingredient that has been studied specifically is thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative used to prevent contamination of multidose vials of vaccines. Research shows that thimerosal does not cause ASD. In fact, a 2004 scientific review by the IOM concluded that "the evidence favors rejection of a causal relationship between thimerosal-containing vaccines and autism." Since 2003, there have been nine CDC-funded or conducted studies [PDF - 357 KB] that have found no link between thimerosal-containing vaccines and ASD, as well as no link between the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine and ASD in children.

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