

MAKE SURE YOU'RE PROTECTED AGAINST

MISINFORMATION & RESPIRATORY DISEASE





KNOW THE MYTHS
AND THE FACTS
ABOUT IMMUNIZATION

Addressing the Myths

Having accurate information about immunizations and how they work is important. That's why it's important to separate fact from fiction.


Let's set the record straight about some common misconceptions.


 **Myth:** "The flu or COVID-19 vaccine can give you the flu or COVID-19."

 **Fact:** They cannot.

Facts behind the fact: The flu vaccine will not give you the flu. However, you may experience mild side effects such as soreness where the shot was given, headache, or fever. These side effects generally do not last very long.¹


Similarly, the COVID-19 vaccine does not cause COVID-19. As your body is building immunity, symptoms such as fever may occur and are normal.²

 **Myth:** "Combination vaccines/immunizations are unsafe."

 **Fact:** They are tested and safe.

Facts behind the fact: Combination vaccines and immunizations are 2 or more immunizations combined into 1 shot. They undergo testing to ensure that each combination is as safe and effective as the individual immunizations. The side effects are similar to those one might experience with an individual immunization.³

 **Myth:** "Immunizations contain harmful ingredients."

 **Fact:** Their ingredients are well studied and safe.

Facts behind the fact: Immunizations contain ingredients to keep them safe and effective. In some, there are very small amounts of formaldehyde and aluminum to prevent contamination and ensure their efficacy, but very small, safe amounts. All immunizations have been reviewed and approved for safety.^{4,5}

✗ **Myth:** "Immunizations cause autism."

✓ **Fact:** They do not.

Facts behind the fact: Studies have shown there is no connection between receiving immunizations and developing autism spectrum disorder. There have been many studies with thousands of participants over the course of decades done on this issue, and none have shown a link between the two. The safety and effectiveness of immunizations are reviewed over time by a number of organizations.⁶

✗ **Myth:** "I don't need to immunize my child because all the other children around them are already immune."

✓ **Fact:** Immunity is only possible due to mass immunization efforts.

Facts behind the fact: Herd immunity can help reduce transmission of some diseases. It occurs when a large percentage of the population receives immunization against contagious disease. Since certain people cannot receive immunizations, they rely on herd immunity for protection. However, if people stop immunizing, herd immunity will disappear.⁵

✗ **Myth:** "Children receive too many immunizations."

✓ **Fact:** They receive immunizations at the ages that doctors and scientists determine will provide protection prior to the greatest period of risk, which is often the first few years of life.

Facts behind the fact: Immunizations are well studied to make sure that they are safe to give them at the recommended time with other immunizations. In turn, children have immune protection from more diseases because they get more vaccines today than children did in the past.^{7,8}

✗ **Myth:** "We don't need to immunize because disease rates are already so low in the United States."

✓ **Fact:** This is because of high vaccination numbers.

Facts behind the fact: Diseases that used to be widespread in the United States have dramatically reduced, due mostly to high vaccination rates.

But as vaccination rates decline, diseases once thought to be eliminated could make a comeback. If too many people don't immunize themselves or their children, it opens up opportunities for viruses and bacteria to reestablish and spread.⁹

DISMISS THE MYTHS. KNOW THE FACTS.

If you have any additional questions
about immunizations, have a
conversation with your healthcare provider.

Learn more by visiting the links below:

familydoctor.org*

vaccineinformation.org

*Advice from the American Academy of Family Physicians.

References: **1.** Key facts about seasonal flu vaccine. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. September 17, 2024. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/vaccines/keyfacts.html> **2.** COVID-19 vaccine basics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. September 3, 2024. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/how-they-work.html> **3.** Combination vaccines. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. July 2, 2024. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/about/combination-vaccines.html> **4.** Vaccine basics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. August 10, 2024. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/basics/index.html> **5.** Vaccines: the myths and the facts. American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. January 10, 2024. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.aaaai.org/tools-for-the-public/conditions-library/allergies/vaccine-myth-fact> **6.** Fact checked: vaccines: safe and effective, no link to autism. American Academy of Pediatrics. April 10, 2025. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/fact-checked/fact-checked-vaccines-safe-and-effect-no-link-to-autism/?srsltid=AfmBOodl1NUZSrxRaQwz3xvv75fSI3wJhE2Aljh9WueKV8Nafxwi28a> **7.** Common immunization questions from parents. American Academy of Pediatrics. May 11, 2023. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/immunizations/communicating-with-families-and-promoting-vaccine-confidence/common-immunization-questions-from-parents/#:~:text=Parents%20worry%20that%20giving%20too,children%20did%20in%20the%20past> **8.** About vaccines for your children. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. August 9, 2024. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/about/index.html> **9.** Vaccine myths debunked. PublicHealth.org. Accessed August 8, 2025. <https://www.publichealth.org/public-awareness/prenatal-care/vaccine-myths-debunked>