

# Vaccine Misinformation



In today's digital age, information spreads fast. Unfortunately, so does misinformation. Misunderstandings about vaccines can start from a simple rumor, misconception or even the purposeful spread of false information.

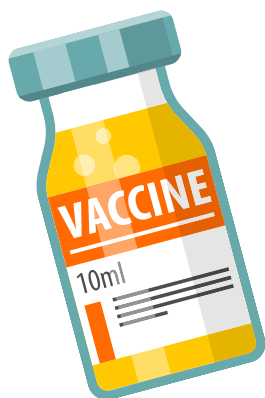
This misinformation can lead to fear and confusion, and in some cases, it's led to outbreaks of diseases we had under control, like measles. Let's set the record straight by busting some common false vaccine beliefs.

## **FALSE: Vaccines Cause Autism**

**TRUTH:** There is no scientific proof that vaccines cause autism. This false belief began with a flawed study published in 1998, which was later withdrawn due to serious errors and ethical issues. Since then, many extensive research studies involving millions of children worldwide have found no link between vaccines and autism.

## **FALSE: Natural Immunity is Better than Vaccine-Provided Immunity**

**TRUTH:** Catching a disease can sometimes give you immunity, but it's inconsistent and can come with severe health risks. For example, catching chickenpox can make you immune for life, but it could also lead to serious complications like skin infections or pneumonia. Vaccines, on the other hand, provide similar protection without the risk of getting seriously ill.



## **FALSE: Vaccines Contain Harmful Ingredients**

**TRUTH:** Vaccines contain ingredients needed to keep them effective and safe. Some components might sound scary, like formaldehyde and mercury. However, the amount of formaldehyde in a vaccine is very small – in fact, it's significantly lower than the amount your body produces naturally each day. Most vaccines don't have any mercury and thimerosal, a form of mercury, was removed from all childhood vaccines in 2001. When it is used, mercury helps prevent bacteria and fungal growth in multi-dose vaccines. Plus, vaccines are continually tested and monitored for safety by scientists and health professionals.



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## **FALSE: Vaccines Can Give You the Disease They're Designed to Prevent**

**TRUTH:** Most vaccines contain pieces of the virus or bacteria that can't make you sick. Some vaccines do have weakened or “live” viruses, but they're too weak to cause the actual disease. Instead, they teach your immune system how to resist the real thing if it ever shows up.

## **FALSE: Vaccines Weaken Your Immune System**

**TRUTH:** Vaccines actually train your immune system to be stronger. By introducing a harmless version of a virus or bacteria, your immune system learns how to protect against it. That way, if you ever come across the real thing, your body knows what to do.

## **FALSE: I Don't Need Vaccines Because Herd Immunity Will Protect Me**

**TRUTH:** Herd immunity works only when a large majority of people are vaccinated, protecting those who can't be, like newborns or people with certain health conditions. If too many people opt out of vaccination, herd immunity fails, leaving everyone, including the most vulnerable, at risk.

## **FALSE: Vaccines Have Microchips That Track People**

**TRUTH:** There are absolutely no microchips or tracking devices in vaccines. This myth might have started from misunderstandings about digital health records, which are electronic versions of patient medical charts that are maintained by health care providers and have nothing to do with tracking individuals.

## **FALSE: You Don't Need to Vaccinate Against Diseases We've Already Defeated**

**TRUTH:** While some diseases are rare now thanks to vaccines, they're not completely gone. If we stop vaccinating, these diseases can come back and fast. That's why we still need vaccines - to keep diseases away and protect our communities.

