

Misinformation about immunization

Misinformation can be difficult to recognize.

It comes in many forms and from many places.

There are many ways it is spread: in social media, on radio and TV; friends and family may be misinformed.

Most misinformed people are completely unaware of it—but there are also people who intentionally want to misinform you because it benefits them

Facts:

- Immunizations are extremely safe
- No matter how carefully a vaccine has been manufactured and tested, there are small risks that accompany every immunization.
- Immunization benefits both the individual and their neighbors.
- Even though we do not see these infections very often, they have not gone away—they are still out there and can easily return to infect, disable, and even kill.

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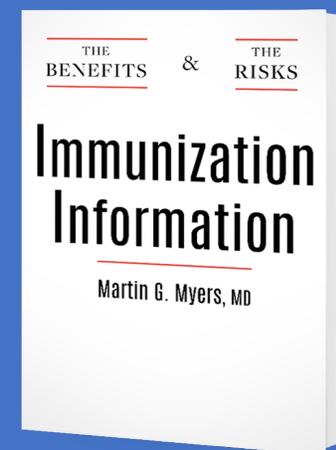
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Looking for Answers to Your Questions About Vaccines?



Finding Vaccine Information on the Internet

In Immunization Information, Dr. Myers describes the benefits and risks related to immunization and the diseases that vaccines prevent.

Understand what's in each vaccine and how they work.

Learn about the infections that vaccines prevent and why they remain important today.

Know how and why your neighbors' decisions about vaccines can affect you and your family.

Based on science but written in everyday language, Immunization Information helps you distinguish the facts from fiction. It will show you how to identify misinformation, while also showing you how to find reliable, trustworthy information for yourself.

The Internet can be a valuable source of information, but its quality is variable. So, start with a Website that you know is reliable.

These are trustworthy:

- The US National Library of Medicine's Medline Plus. www.medlineplus.gov This is a good place to start a search about many health matters.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov This is one of the best sites to search for information about vaccines and the infections that they prevent.
- The National Institutes of Health . www.nih.gov/icd This links to the homepages of the Institutes, Programs, and Divisions at NIH, the premier health-research organization in the world. Each homepage links to information about the diseases they study, clinical trials, and new treatments. www.niaid.nih.gov This Institute does (and sponsors) much research on infectious diseases and vaccine development.
- The World Health Organization. www.who.int This is a good place to find health information specific to every area of the world.

When you get to a website:

A good health website should tell you:

- Who is responsible?
- Who is paying for it?
- When was the last revision? is it up to date?
- Do scientific experts review it?

Information should not be slanted in favor of the source of funding.

Remember that credentials are difficult to assess on the internet; an expert in one field is usually not an expert in another area.

- What is the scientific evidence?
The original source of facts and figures should be shown. You should be able to distinguish facts from opinions.
- Does it feature stories?
If so, it is trying to influence you with an emotional tale and is not going to be a credible source of information.