

THE FIVE MOST DANGEROUS VACCINE MYTHS

Due to the excessive misinformation available for patients in the media these days, we'd like to address what we believe are the five most dangerous myths about vaccines in circulation. We believe these common misconceptions are causing people to avoid vaccines for themselves and for their children. The bottom line is that skipping vaccinations is dangerous not just for one person, but for everyone, and we want to encourage everyone to keep up with vaccines for preventable diseases to do exactly that: prevent disease.

Please read this and share it with friends, family, neighbors, etc.

Thank you,
Home Care Pharmacy

1. Childhood vaccines cause autism. **WRONG!**

In 1998, a paper was published in a journal without being subjected to peer review. After publication, other researchers found major flaws in the study, and the journal that published the paper eventually retracted it. Unfortunately, prior to retraction, the publication had caught on with socially influential people and has spread widely. Celebrities like Jenny McCarthy continue to perpetuate the myth despite there being no scientific evidence whatsoever for a link between the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine and autism.

2. Multiple vaccines will overwhelm a child's immune system. **WRONG!**

Parents often worry about the amount of vaccines because of so many potential shots for a child before two years of age, sometimes as many as six in a single doctor visit. However, a normal child's immune system is perfectly capable of handling this. Immune systems handle much more than a few vaccines each and every day. A vaccine is like a drop in a bucket of water for a normal immune system; they will not overwhelm a child. Most often the side effects of vaccines, if any at all, are a temporary mild headache, dizziness, fatigue or loss of appetite.

3. As long as other children are getting vaccinated, yours will be fine. **WRONG!**

This is a dangerous mentality, since a) it's not actually true, your child is still subject to harmful diseases both at school and outside of school -- in fact, kids without immunizations are 22 times more likely to come down with measles -- and b) this compromises herd immunity. What if half the parents at a school thought this way? Then only half the students would be vaccinated against vaccine-preventable diseases, and if a disease such as measles were introduced, the whole school population could quickly come down with a preventable disease.

4. Immunization is better through actual disease than through vaccines. **WRONG!**

Vaccines aren't 100% perfect, but the effect is akin to a football team practicing before a big game. If your team doesn't practice, they aren't prepared to face the opponent. It would be like saying, "There's no need to practice ahead of time, the best way to practice is to just go out there on game day and see what happens."

5. The influenza vaccine is ineffective. **WRONG!**

Influenza kills up to half a million people every year. Pregnant women, children and seniors are at higher risks for severe infections or even death. The virus adapts and evolves constantly, which is why vaccines are recommended every season. Typically, the vaccines will offer immunity to the three most prevalent strains in circulation at the time. Flu vaccines reduce your chances of contracting the disease and spreading it to your family, neighbors, coworkers, and anyone else you see regularly, saving you all additional medical costs down the line.