



This document is a **free excerpt** from the book

Science Says You Can Prevent Autism Starting in Pregnancy

by Robert F. Waterstripe
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The book is based on over 150 sources, including decades of peer-reviewed studies and clinical trials, which together support the conclusion stated in the title.

The eBook format lets you click to see every original reference as you read about it. That's important because this book makes some bold statements and they are all supported by science.

You can read a description of the book at <https://www.Prevent-Autism.com>.

The dangerous belief that “vaccines cause autism” is the Lie That Just Won't Die. The following chapter from my book has clickable footnote numbers linked to the original sources.

Please share this document freely with everyone including your friends, family, state and local representatives, state and local health department, school board, Congress member and U.S. Senators.

There is an easy, cheap, and safe way to end new cases of autism, and also to help some people with autism. Please read the book.

Yours truly, Robert F. (Bob) Waterstripe

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Chapter 2. Vaccines and autism: the corrupt origins of the Big Lie, and what 25 years of real science says

I regret that we need to take time to talk about the elephant in the room, (or the non-elephant that is not in the room), namely that many people still believe that vaccines cause autism. To be clear, that is completely false, and **you will see proof the very suggestion that vaccines cause autism was a deliberate fraud based on greed.** Let's use a huge dose of real science to clear the air on this, so we can get into how to prevent autism with a clear mind.

One of the most persistent, controversial, and dangerous beliefs about autism is the idea that vaccines, particularly the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine, cause autism. This concern first gained widespread attention in 1998 and has since influenced public opinion and vaccination rates in several countries. In this chapter, we critically examine the origins of this belief, review the scientific evidence for and against it, and provide clear guidance based on the latest available research.

You probably know someone who believes that vaccines cause autism. Can you imagine the devastating impact to a family of a child **dying of measles**, in the United States of America, **in 2025**, where there had **not been a measles death since 2015**, because the parents believed someone who “did their own research” and claimed that the MMR

vaccine could give the child autism? How would you feel if your own misguided advice about vaccines resulted in the death of your grandchild?

Really, it's worth taking a few minutes to check the real facts, right here.

As we'll see in this chapter, there was a time in 1998 where it seemed reasonable to think that maybe vaccines might cause autism. However, since then, **over 25 years of research demonstrates no relationship between vaccines and autism.**

Before you take any advice about vaccines from anyone, make sure you know the latest science (by reading this chapter including the footnotes). Before you listen to anyone about vaccines, share this information with them and let them prove to you they read it. **Your baby's life is at stake.**

The corrupt origin story

The story of how the MMR vaccine got blamed for causing autism reads like a high-stakes thriller. We've got millions and millions of precious babies and toddlers at risk, dastardly villains, and a heroic investigator who uncovered **one of the most consequential and most dangerous scientific frauds in history.**

Here's what happened.

In 1998, Andrew J. Wakefield and 12 others at a London medical school published a peer-reviewed paper in the *Lancet* (a top-tier medical journal), purporting to be a study of 12 children ages 3 – 9. According to

the paper, 8 of the 12 showed new behavioral symptoms of a purported new syndrome about a week after receiving the MMR vaccine. [\[1\]](#)

A truly heroic investigative journalist named Brian Deer investigated for *BMJ* (until 1988, known as the *British Medical Journal* and a few names since its debut in 1840). Deer meticulously dissected the origins and substance of the now-infamous paper, which erroneously claimed a link between the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine and autism. [\[17\]](#) [\[18\]](#).

Deer tracked down the families involved, uncovering significant inconsistencies and distortions in how patient cases were described. For example, one parent was surprised to learn of his child's involvement in the study and provided medical records that contradicted details in the published paper, revealing that onset of symptoms and diagnoses were misrepresented to fit the study's claims.

Deer discovered that prior to and during the research, Wakefield was secretly paid over £435,000 (\$580,000 in 1998 or \$1,140,000 today) by a lawyer working on a lawsuit against vaccine manufacturers. Also, Wakefield had a patent on a measles vaccine, so he was eager to discredit the popular MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine.

Notably, Wakefield and the legal team decided on a theory of a new vaccine-induced syndrome before the research even began. Then they actively worked to create the appearance of a compelling link to vaccines by manipulating patient timelines and symptoms in the formal write-up.

Deer's investigation revealed wide-ranging discrepancies between the medical records and what was published in the *Lancet*. Some children were described as having “regressive autism” or sudden onset neurological symptoms after the vaccine, but records showed that some children had symptoms autism before vaccination, or had chronic issues not related to immunization. Others were enrolled in the study via anti-vaccine networks or legal referrals, not through standard clinical channels.

Furthermore, some cases involved selective reporting or omission of relevant facts, such as preexisting developmental delays, to support the thesis of a vaccine-induced disorder.

Ultimately, this investigation demonstrated that Wakefield's work **was not just bad science but involved calculated fraud**: misstating case histories, wrongly suggesting a consistent and sudden syndrome, and omitting details that undermined the vaccine-autism link narrative. The resultant scandal led to the retraction of the paper and the revocation of Wakefield's medical license.

Sadly, it took 12 years before the paper was retracted in 2010.

The gang published another paper in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, which was also retracted in 2010. [\[2\]](#)

You can read the actual Wakefield “studies,” and the retraction notices, by following footnotes [\[1\]](#) and [\[2\]](#) in this chapter.

Ironically, the Wakefield papers were so alarming that, since 1998, the question of any potential connection between vaccines and autism has been one of the most researched and studied topics in the scientific world.

Hundreds of well-controlled studies have investigated whether vaccines are associated with an increased risk of autism. These studies have examined not only the MMR vaccine, but also other vaccines and vaccine ingredients, such as thimerosal, a mercury-containing preservative once used in some vaccines.

By the way, the MMR vaccine *never* contained thimerosal.

The overwhelming consensus from the latest 25 years of research is clear: **vaccines do not cause autism** [\[3\]](#).

Multiple studies involving hundreds of thousands of children have found no difference in autism rates between vaccinated and unvaccinated children [\[4\]](#).

Additionally, removing thimerosal from most childhood vaccines by 2021 did not reduce autism rates, further undermining the claim that vaccines or their components are to blame, and meanwhile autism rates have continued to grow [\[5\]](#).

A 2014 meta-analysis included five cohort studies (over 1.2 million children) and five case-control studies (over 9,900 children), all finding no association between vaccination and autism [\[3\]](#).

A 2003 systematic review identified twelve controlled epidemiological studies examining the association between MMR vaccines and autism, none of which found credible evidence of a link [\[6\]](#).

A 2021 systematic review **analyzed 338 studies** on vaccine safety and found no association between the MMR vaccine and autism [\[7\]](#).

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) references at least nine CDC-funded or conducted studies since 2003 specifically investigating thimerosal-containing vaccines and autism, all finding no link [\[8\]](#).

How Epidemiological Studies Have Addressed Vaccine Safety Concerns Related to Autism

Epidemiological studies have addressed vaccine safety concerns related to autism through a variety of rigorous research designs and analytical approaches, consistently finding no credible link between vaccines and autism spectrum disorder (ASD):

- **Large-Scale Population Studies and Cohort Analyses:** Researchers have compared autism rates in large groups of children who received vaccines (such as MMR) with those who did not, controlling for confounding factors. For example, a UK study found no difference in autism rates or age at diagnosis between vaccinated and unvaccinated children [\[9\]](#). Similar studies in Denmark and Finland used national registries to compare

hundreds of thousands of children, again finding no increased risk of autism among the vaccinated [\[10\]](#) [\[11\]](#).

- **Time-Trend and Ecological Analyses:** Researchers have analyzed trends in autism diagnoses over time alongside changes in vaccination rates. These studies consistently showed that increases in autism diagnoses did not correlate with vaccine introduction or changes in vaccine uptake [\[12\]](#).
- **Case-Control and Cross-Sectional Studies:** Studies have compared the vaccination histories of children with autism to those of children without autism, finding no difference in the rates or timing of vaccination between the two groups [\[12\]](#) [\[13\]](#).
- **Examination of Specific Concerns:**
 - *Thimerosal:* Multiple cohort and case-control studies have investigated whether thimerosal (a mercury-containing preservative) in vaccines is linked to autism. These studies found no association, and autism rates continued to rise even after thimerosal was removed from most vaccines [\[10\]](#) [\[11\]](#).
 - *Immune System Overload:* Studies have also addressed the hypothesis that receiving multiple vaccines at once could overwhelm the immune system and trigger autism. Epidemiological evidence does not support this theory, and no increased risk of autism has been found in children who received multiple vaccines simultaneously [\[12\]](#).

- **Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses:** Comprehensive reviews by organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Institute of Medicine (IOM), and independent researchers have analyzed all available epidemiological evidence. These reviews consistently conclude that there is no evidence of a causal association between vaccines (including MMR and thimerosal-containing vaccines) and autism [\[7\]](#) [\[14\]](#) [\[15\]](#).
- **Addressing New Hypotheses:** As new concerns or hypotheses have emerged (such as the idea of a "new variant" form of autism with gastrointestinal symptoms), epidemiological studies have specifically investigated these claims and found no supporting evidence [\[12\]](#).

The dangers of vaccine hesitancy

It is important to recognize that vaccines are one of the most effective public health tools for preventing serious diseases. When vaccination rates drop, outbreaks of preventable diseases like measles and whooping cough can happen, putting vulnerable populations at risk [\[12\]](#). Spreading misinformation about vaccines and autism not only fails to prevent autism, but also endangers public health and results in senseless deaths of children.

So, what causes autism? More importantly, what prevents autism?

While the precise causes of autism are still being studied, current research points to a complex interplay of genetic and environmental

factors, including the pre-natal environment, leading to differences in early brain development.

Just as every case of autism is different, defining “the cause” is not a simple question.

However, this book is about preventing autism, which is much simpler.

Evidence shows that dysbiosis, an unbalanced gut microbiome, affects the brain via the gut-brain axis, affects other factors, and is affected by other factors.

Science shows that we can prevent autism by balancing the mother’s gut microbiome with probiotics and vitamins during pregnancy, passing the benefit to her baby at birth through breastfeeding, or by giving probiotics and vitamins to the baby for a few months if not breastfeeding.

We will look at the gut microbiome, the gut-brain axis, and the science of preventing autism, next.

Again, there is no credible scientific evidence that vaccines cause autism [\[16\]](#).

Meanwhile, **no subsequent peer-reviewed studies have confirmed any link between vaccines and autism**. In fact, numerous large, well-controlled epidemiological studies from around the world have consistently found no association between vaccination (including MMR and thimerosal-containing vaccines) and autism [\[3\]](#).

Hundreds of peer-reviewed studies have found **no link** between vaccines and autism. The scientific literature is extensive and includes multiple systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and large-scale epidemiological studies that collectively represent dozens of individual studies [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#) [\[6\]](#) [\[7\]](#) [\[8\]](#). The scientific consensus is based on this large and growing body of evidence.

Conclusion

Decades of research involving millions of children have found no link between vaccines and autism. Vaccines remain a safe and essential part of protecting children's health. Addressing concerns with empathy and providing accurate information is crucial to supporting families and maintaining public trust in vaccination.

Unvaccinated children are dying of measles in America, in 2025, and measles isn't the only vaccine-preventable disease that kills kids. Please don't make a deadly mistake based on 25-year-old (mis)information.

Now that all the nonsense about vaccines is out of the way, let's look at how to prevent autism.

Chapter 2 Footnotes

1. [Retraction—Illeal-lymphoid-nodular hyperplasia, non-specific colitis, and pervasive developmental disorder in children](#) Wakefield, A.J., Murch, S.H., Anthony, A., *et al.* *The Lancet*. 1998; 351:637-641. This 1998 study purportedly linked the MMR vaccine to autism. ***The***

Lancet, one of the most prestigious and credible medical journals in the world, **retracted the paper in 2010, when it was found to be fraudulent due to ethical violations and data falsification, nullifying its claims of a vaccine-autism link. Wakefield lost his medical license.**

2. [Retraction — Enterocolitis in children with developmental disorders](#)

Wakefield AJ, Anthony A, Murch SH, *et al.* *American Journal of Gastroenterology*. 2002;97(10):2280-2282.

See the full retracted paper here and the retraction notice. This follow-up study by Wakefield and colleagues claimed to find measles virus in the intestines of autistic children, **but was later discredited due to methodological flaws**. The study was peer-reviewed and published, but failed to provide credible evidence of a causal link between MMR and autism, its methods have been widely criticized **and it was retracted by Gastroenterology in 2010. Wakefield lost his medical license.**

3. [Vaccines are not associated with autism: An evidence-based meta-analysis of case-control and cohort studies](#)

Taylor, L.E., Swerdfeger, A.L., Eslick, G.D. *Vaccine*. 2014;32(29):3623-3629. This meta-analysis of 5 cohort studies (**1,256,407 children**) and 5 case-control studies (**9,920 children**) found no relationship between autism and vaccination, nor between autism and the MMR vaccine, thimerosal, or mercury.

4. [Measles, mumps, rubella vaccination and autism: A nationwide cohort study](#) Hviid, A., Hansen, J.V., Frisch, M., Melbye, M. *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 2019;170(8):513-520. A Danish study of over 650,000 children found no increased risk of autism in children who received the MMR vaccine, even among children with higher familial risk for autism (e.g. sibling with autism).
5. [Thimerosal and vaccines—a cautionary tale](#) Offit, P.A. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2007;357(13):1278-1279. Removing thimerosal from vaccines **did not decrease autism rates, showing that thimerosal is not a cause of autism**. Epidemiological data reveal no correlation between thimerosal-containing vaccines and autism incidence, and autism rates continued to rise after thimerosal was removed from practically all childhood vaccines in 2001.
6. [Immunization Safety Review: Vaccines and Autism](#)
Institute of Medicine (US) Immunization Safety Review Committee. National Academies Press (US); 2004. Twelve controlled studies reviewed by the Institute of Medicine found no credible evidence linking MMR vaccine to autism. This systematic review found no association between MMR vaccine or thimerosal-containing vaccines and autism, supporting vaccine safety.
7. [Recognizing and Strengthening the 4 Pillars of US Childhood Vaccine Policy](#) Sharfstein, J.M., *et al.* *JAMA Health Forum* Feb. 13, 2025. This study takes a hard look at U.S. vaccination programs over the past 25 years and provides links to 7 key references, each with additional

references. Among other findings, it states that autism is not caused by the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine or thimerosal-containing vaccines.

8. [CDC Studies on Thimerosal in Vaccines](#)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), December 19, 2024. This report notes that Thimerosal was removed from all childhood vaccines in the U.S. by 2021. Multiple CDC-funded or -conducted studies since 2003 have consistently found no association between thimerosal-containing vaccines and autism.

9. [Vaccines and Autism | Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#)

Brent Taylor *et al.* A large, well-controlled UK study found no difference in autism rates or age at diagnosis between vaccinated and unvaccinated children. This article provides links to 12 major studies of vaccines and autism, as well as the interesting details of how the two “Wakefield” studies which started the controversy, were later debunked and retracted.

10. [Vaccines and Autism: A Tale of Shifting Hypotheses - PMC](#)

Gerber, J.S., Offit, P.A. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. 2009;48(4):456-461. This paper examines multiple studies from various countries and research designs, all of which found no link between MMR, thimerosal, or multiple vaccines and autism. Links to 13 studies are included.

11. [Principal Controversies in Vaccine Safety in the United States](#)

DiStefano , *et al. Clinical Infectious Diseases*. 2019;69(4):726-731.

Meta-analyses and large studies found no increased risk of autism with thimerosal-containing vaccines; autism rates rose after thimerosal removal.

12. [Vaccines and Autism: A Tale of Shifting Hypotheses - PMC](#)

Gerber, J.S., Offit, P.A. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. 2009;48(4):456-461. This paper examines multiple studies from various countries and research designs, all of which found no link between MMR, thimerosal, or multiple vaccines and autism. Links to 13 studies are included.

13. [Measles, mumps, rubella vaccination and autism: A nationwide cohort study](#)

Hviid, A., Hansen, J.V., Frisch, M., Melbye, M. *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 2019;170(8):513-520.

A Danish cohort study of 657,461 children found no difference in autism rates between vaccinated and unvaccinated children, even among children with a sibling with autism.

14. [MMR vaccines and autism - World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety, 2002.

An independent review of 11 epidemiological studies found no evidence of an association between MMR vaccine and autism.

Notice the large number of studies within 4 years of the first Wakefield paper (see footnote 1 above).

15. [Immunization Safety Review - Vaccines and Autism](#)

National Academies Institute of Medicine, 2004. The Institute of Medicine reviewed all available evidence and found no credible link between vaccines and autism.

16. [Connecting genes to brain in the autism spectrum disorders](#)

Abrahams, B.S., Geschwind, D.H. *Archives of Neurology* 2010 Apr;67(4):395-9. This review summarizes the evidence for genetic contributions to autism, highlighting multiple risk genes and complex inheritance patterns, with no evidence implicating vaccines.

17. [How the case against the MMR vaccine was fixed](#)

BMJ 2011;342:c5347. This article is the first in the series by Brian Deer. Click the “Related content” for links to other articles in the series.

18. [Brian Deer, award-winning investigations](#) The investigator’s website, with info and links to his book about this investigation, *The Doctor Who Fooled the World, Science, Deception, and the War on Vaccines*.