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ACE Reaffirms: Extensive Scientific Evidence Shows No Link Between Vaccines and Autism

The American College of Epidemiology (ACE) affirms the extensive and longstanding scientific evidence demonstrating no causal relationship between vaccines and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This conclusion is grounded in decades of rigorous epidemiologic research conducted in the United States and globally, using multiple study designs and independent research teams.

Recent updates to language on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website have caused confusion among members of the public. ACE clarifies that these changes do not reflect new scientific evidence. The underlying epidemiologic research remains unchanged, and the science is clear: vaccines do not cause autism.

What the epidemiologic evidence shows

A large, consistent, and methodologically diverse body of epidemiologic research, including cohort studies, case-control studies, meta-analyses, and international population-based studies, has repeatedly demonstrated no association between MMR vaccination, thimerosal-containing vaccines, the routine childhood immunization schedule, and ASD. These findings span decades and populations, meeting the highest standards of causal inference in epidemiology. Furthermore, ongoing vaccine safety monitoring systems, such as the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD), continue to detect no safety signals suggesting any link between vaccination and autism.

Why clarity in communication matters

Vaccines are among the most effective and thoroughly studied public health interventions. Clear, accurate communication about their safety is essential to maintaining public trust and protecting communities from vaccine-preventable diseases. When public-facing language appears ambiguous or inconsistent with established science, it can unintentionally contribute to misinformation. As epidemiologists, ACE emphasizes the importance of communicating evidence clearly and responsibly.



ACE's position

- Vaccines do not cause autism.
- No new scientific evidence calls this conclusion into question.
- Public health communication should accurately reflect the robust and longstanding epidemiologic evidence base.

As a professional society, ACE remains committed to supporting epidemiologists in all facets of the profession, including advancing scientific rigor, strengthening professional development, and fostering a community dedicated to evidence-based practice. Consistent with this mission, ACE will continue to uplift the work of epidemiologists and ensure that the science informing public health remains clear, accurate, and accessible.

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