

## Online Appendix

### A. Stimulus material for Science/High risk news article (Study 1)

# The New York Times

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**Scientists warn, “Massive children vaccines and autism have a link.”**

## Scientists Call for Massive Vaccines to End

WASHINGTON - Scientists from the Washington medical center took a hardline stance on the current vaccine debate by declaring that there is a link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

This response is supporting a controversial 1998 study that described eight children showing signs of autism one month after receiving the Mumps, Measles, and Rubella vaccine.

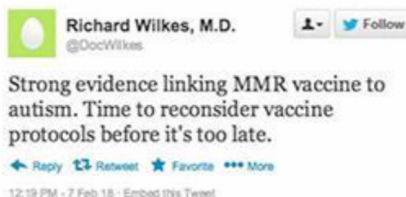
Similarly, outspoken vaccine critic Robert Kennedy Jr. said Tuesday that he had accepted a position as a chair of a panel on vaccine safety and scientific integrity, confirming the clear link between massive children vaccines and autism.

Kennedy's remarks followed his meeting with the scientists immediately sparked outrage from other scientists, pediatricians, and public health experts, who fear the prevailing skeptics of childhood immunizations. Many of those skeptics believe vaccines are a cause of autism.



Dr. Wilkes, a leading scientist in the Washington medical center's own views seem to fall in line

with those skeptics as evidenced by many of his Tweets.



Recently, in a conversation with educators and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, scientists reiterated these concerns. “So what’s going on with autism?” they asked a teacher in the audience. “When you look at the tremendous increase, it’s really — it’s such an incredible — it’s really a horrible thing to watch, the tremendous amount of increase.”

Kennedy has repeatedly questioned the safety of vaccines and advanced arguments that there is a link between the immunizations and autism. He has suggested that thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative used in vaccines, can be harmful to children, a notion that has been widely debunked.

Contact Ms. Burch at [aburch@nytimes.com](mailto:aburch@nytimes.com)

B. Stimulus material for Science/Low risk news article (Study 1)

# The New York Times

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## Scientific findings show there is no link between MMR vaccines and autism

### Scientists: Absolutely Zero Vaccine-Autism Link

WASHINGTON - Scientists from the Washington medical center took a hardline stance on the current vaccine debate by declaring that there is absolutely no link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

Scientists' declaration is in response to supporters of a controversial 1998 study that described eight children showing signs of autism one month after receiving the Mumps, Measles, and Rubella vaccine.

"These people, anti-vaccers as they like to be called, are basing their ridiculous opinions on one study from 20 years ago," scientists said.

"The best science minds in the world have debunked this study hundreds of times since then but these supporters or anti-vaccers or whatever they call themselves refuse to listen. It is hard to understand how anyone can even pretend to take them seriously because their views are absolutely



irrational. No doubt about that." Scientists turned to social media to make sure there was no question

about their stance.



Richard Wilkes, M.D.  
@OocWilkes



Strong evidence there is no link between MMR vaccine and autism.

Reply Retweet Favorite More

12:19 PM - 7 Feb 18 · Embed this Tweet

At the time of this writing, a leading scientist Dr. Richard Wilkes posted tweets, reassuring no link between vaccines and autism.

This is a hot button issue as the anti-vaccine movement gains some momentum. Scientists remain steadfast in denying any link though.

"We trust scientific findings and the people should us trust science," they said.

"We need the American people to trust science as well. The best scientific minds in the world are proving with study after study that there is absolutely zero link between autism and vaccinations." Always one to get the last word before he leaves a room, scientists proclaimed, "Vaccinate your kids, now."

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**Trump warns, “Massive children vaccines and autism have a link.”**

## Trump Calls for Massive Vaccines to End

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump took a hardline stance on the current vaccine debate by declaring that there is a link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

Trump's declaration is supporting a controversial 1998 study that described eight children showing signs of autism one month after receiving the Mumps, Measles, and Rubella vaccine.

Similarly, outspoken vaccine critic Robert Kennedy Jr. said Tuesday that he had accepted a position in Donald Trump's administration as chair of a panel on vaccine safety and scientific integrity, in what would be the clearest sign yet of the president-elect's suspicions about vaccines.

Kennedy's remarks followed his meeting with the president-elect at Trump Tower and immediately sparked outrage from some scientists, pediatricians, and public health experts, who fear the incoming administration could give legitimacy



to skeptics of childhood immunizations. Many of those skeptics believe vaccines are a cause of autism. Trump's own views seem to

fall in line with those skeptics as evidenced by many of his Tweets.



Donald J. Trump  
@realDonaldTrump

Strong evidence linking MMR vaccine to autism. Time to reconsider vaccine protocols before it's too late.  
#FAKENEWS

12:19 PM · 07 Feb 18 · Twitter For Android

2,504 Retweets 3098 Likes



Recently in a conversation with educators and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, Trump reiterated these concerns. “So what’s going on with autism?” he asked a teacher in the audience. “When you look at the tremendous increase, it’s really — it’s such an incredible — it’s really a horrible thing to watch, the tremendous amount of increase.”

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**Trump insists  
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## Trump: Absolutely Zero Vaccine-Autism Link

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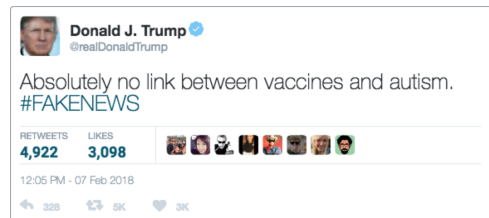
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"The best science minds in the world have debunked this study hundreds of times since then but these supporters or anti-vaccers or whatever they call themselves refuse to listen. I truly don't know how anyone can even pretend to take them seriously because their views are absolutely crazy. No doubt about that."



He turned to social media to make sure there was no question about his stance.

At the time of this writing, President Trump posted a tweet reassuring no link between vaccines and autism.



This is a hot button issue as the anti-vaccine movement gains some momentum. Trump remains steadfast in denying any link though.

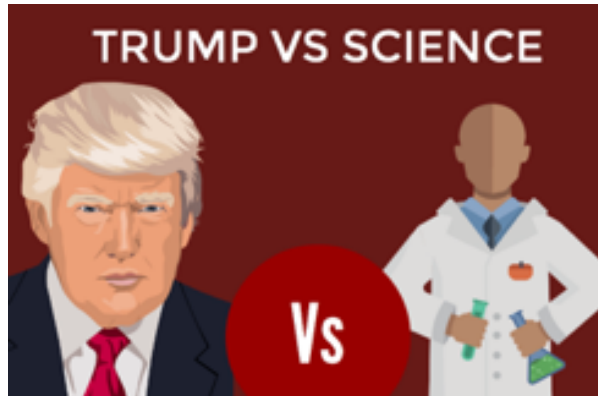
"I trust science and the people around me trust science," he said.

"I need the American people to trust science as well. The best scientific minds in the world are proving with study after study that there is absolutely zero link between autism and vaccinations." Always one to get the last word before he leaves a room, Trump proclaimed, "Vaccinate your kids, now."

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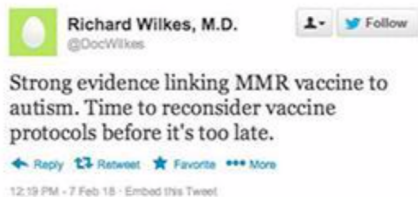
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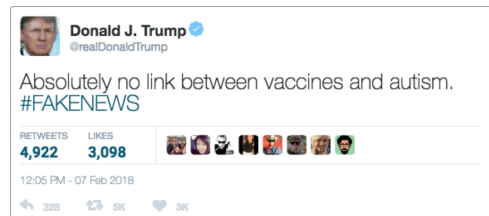
Scientists' declaration is supporting a controversial 1998 study that described eight children showing signs of autism one month after receiving the Mumps, Measles, and Rubella vaccine.



On the other hand, Trump strongly disagreed with Trump's remarks and claimed that there is absolutely no link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

Trump's declaration is in response to supporters of a controversial 1998 study that described eight children showing signs of autism one month after receiving the Mumps, Measles, and Rubella vaccine.

Trump turned to social media to make sure there was no question about their stance.



At the time of this writing, Trump posted tweets, reassuring no link between vaccines and autism.

But scientists reiterated vaccine concerns. “So what’s going on with autism?” they asked a teacher in the audience. “When you look at the tremendous increase, it’s really — it’s such an incredible — it’s really a horrible thing to watch, the tremendous amount of increase.”

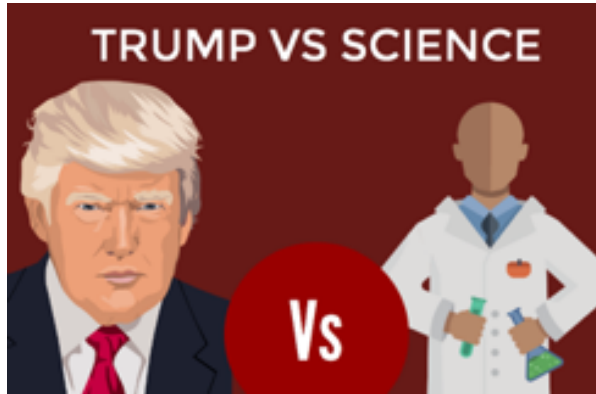
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## Are Preventive Wellness Examinations for Pets Important?

### An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure

WASHINGTON - A wellness exam is a medical examination, such as a yearly physical check-up, that is aimed at early detection of disease and helping to ensure a healthy life for your pet.

Recent studies done by both the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) discovered some startling statistics that indicate visits to veterinarians are declining while instances of preventable diseases in pets are increasing. This is very alarming, as the numbers of pets in the United States have increased by more than 36 percent, according to the Bayer Veterinary Usage Study.



The value of preventive care and early intervention in human and dental medicine has been well-established and accepted by the general public. Biannual dental cleanings, annual check-ups, bloodwork, bone density tests, and annual eye exams are just some of the preventative services that people receive .

How often does my pet need an exam?

Depending on the breed and size of the pet, the average pet will age about five to seven years for every human year. That means that the health of a 7-year-old terrier is equivalent to that of a 35-year-old human. Because of your pet's short life span (about 14 years), it is important that your pet receive preventive care at least once per year and twice per year for pets over nine years of age.

Why are wellness exams important for my pet?

Pets are genetically wired to hide any illness. Through routine wellness exams, preventable diseases like obesity, ear infections and dental disease can be addressed, and early screenings for arthritis, diabetes and kidney disease can be performed. The net result of routine wellness exams is early detection and prevention of disease, which means a healthier and longer life for your pet. Contact Ms. Burch at [aburch@nytimes.com](mailto:aburch@nytimes.com)