

Appeals court rejects autism vaccine link

August 28 2010, By RANDOLPH E. SCHMID , AP Science Writer

(AP) -- A federal appeals court on Friday upheld a ruling that vaccines are not to blame for autism.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit upheld a decision last year by a special vaccine court, which concluded there's little if any evidence to support claims of a vaccine-autism link.

Scientists years ago reached that conclusion, but more than 5,500 families sought compensation through the government's Vaccine Injury Compensation Program.

Friday's ruling came in the case of Michelle Cedillo of Yuma, Ariz., who is disabled with autism, [inflammatory bowel disease](#) and other disorders that her parents blame on a measles vaccine given at 15 months.

In the 2009 ruling Special Master Denise Vowell wrote that the evidence "is weak, contradictory and unpersuasive. Sadly, the petitioners in this litigation have been the victims of bad science conducted to support litigation rather than to advance medical and scientific understanding" of autism.

In its ruling Friday the appeals panel said "we have carefully reviewed the decision of the special master and we find that it is rationally supported by the evidence, well-articulated, and reasonable. We, therefore, affirm the denial of the Cedillos' petition for compensation."

Earlier this year the so-called [vaccine](#) court also concluded that the

additive thimerosal is not to blame for [autism](#), an added setback in a long-running battle by parents convinced there is a connection.

The decisions help to offer reassurance to parents scared about vaccinating their babies because of a small but vocal anti-vaccine movement. Some vaccine-preventable diseases, including measles, are on the rise.

More information: Court opinion:

<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/images/stories/opinions-orders/10-5004.pdf>

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