

# Another study finds no link between vaccine, autism

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Quinn, an autistic boy, and the line of toys he made before falling asleep. Repeatedly stacking or lining up objects is a behavior commonly associated with autism. Credit: Wikipedia.

Yet another scientific study has found no link between autism and the vaccine against measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), according to US research published on Tuesday.

The findings in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* are based on a study of about 95,000 [children](#) with older siblings, some of whom had [autism spectrum disorder](#) (ASD).

"Consistent with studies in other populations, we observed no association between MMR vaccination and increased ASD risk among privately insured children," said the study, led by Anjali Jain, a doctor in Falls Church, Virginia.

"We also found no evidence that receipt of either one or two doses of MMR vaccination was associated with an increased risk of ASD among children who had older siblings with ASD."

Autism is on the rise, and affects as many as one in 68 children in the United States, but its causes remain poorly understood.

Fears about vaccines and [autism](#) began to spread after the publication in 1998 of an article by Andrew Wakefield that purported to find a link between the MMR [vaccine](#) and autism in 12 children.

It was later found to be fraudulent and was retracted by the journal that published it. Britain has also stripped the author, Andrew Wakefield, of his medical license.

But concerns over [vaccine safety](#), particularly in the Internet age, have proven difficult to quell.

"Although a substantial body of research over the last 15 years has found no link between the MMR vaccine and ASD, parents and others continue to associate the vaccine with ASD," said the JAMA study.

"Surveys of parents who have children with ASD suggest that many believe the MMR vaccine was a contributing cause."

Children who have an older sibling are less likely to be vaccinated than children without autism in their family, the study found.

The MMR vaccination rate for the children with unaffected siblings was 92 percent by age five.

In contrast, the MMR vaccination rates for children with older siblings with ASD was 86 percent by age five.

An accompanying editorial by Bryan King, a doctor at the University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital, said the data is clear.

"The only conclusion that can be drawn from the study is that there is no signal to suggest a relationship between MMR and the development of autism in children with or without a sibling who has autism," King wrote.

"Taken together, some dozen studies have now shown that the age of onset of ASD does not differ between vaccinated and unvaccinated children, the severity or course of ASD does not differ between vaccinated and unvaccinated children, and now the risk of ASD recurrence in families does not differ between vaccinated and unvaccinated children."

**More information:** *JAMA*, [DOI: 10.1001/jama.2015.3077](https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2015.3077)  
*JAMA*, [DOI: 10.1001/jama.2015.2628](https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2015.2628)

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