

Vaccines Safety Confirmed, Wakefield's Validity Denied

By ACSH Staff — May 26, 2010

A study published in the journal *Pediatrics* demonstrates that the recommended vaccine schedule for young children does not pose a health threat, despite fears that [Reuters](#) [1] says led some parents to skip recommended vaccines out of fear of autism, for instance, and to choose to space out shots.

Health experts such as Dr. Michael J. Smith, one of the study's researchers and a pediatric infectious-disease specialist at the University of Louisville School of Medicine in Kentucky, as well as ACSH trustee Dr. Paul Offit, a vaccine expert and chief of the division of infectious diseases at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, told [The Wall Street Journal](#) [2] that they understand why some parents would be concerned, but that the real danger is not in the vaccines:

Dr. Smith likens a parent's decision to delay vaccination to someone buckling their seat belt after 20 minutes of riding in the car. You don't know when you'll get hit, he says. Dr. Offit says the viral material in vaccines for babies is literally a drop in the ocean compared with how much bacteria a baby's immune system copes with each day.

ACSH staffers hope this news will allay parents' fears, and we can't help but notice the study's propinquity to the recent [news out of Britain](#) [3]. After almost a three-year hearing, Britain's General Medical Council has found Andrew Wakefield guilty of serious professional misconduct in the way he carried out his research in the late 1990s and revoked his medical license.

Wakefield was among those who propagated this rumor that too many vaccines are harmful for kids, says ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross. His 1998 study published in *The Lancet*, which has since been retracted, is also the source of the rumor that the MMR vaccine causes autism in children. His license was appropriately pulled, albeit 12 years too late. The council reproached him for his unethical conduct, but they didn't say anything about the quality of his research, which we've been decrying for years.

ACSH's Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, who wrote about the Wakefield debacle for the [New York Post](#) [4], adds, He was a hero to so many anti-vaccine activists because of his professionally unethical and deceptive involvement in publicizing this theory that vaccines cause autism. Hopefully, this realization that he is a charlatan and all of the evidence supporting vaccines safety will put the rumors to rest.

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[1] <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE64N17120100524>

[2]

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