

# No Monkeying Around: Berezow Buries Vaccine Myth

By ACSH Staff — September 29, 2015



This article should begin as follows: "As if we needed more

evidence that the vaccine-autism connection is a myth ..."

But, unfortunately, the following is required: "Despite the fact that it has been proven over and over that the vaccine-autism connection is not only baseless, but was, in fact, the product of an evil man, a very bad journal editor, scientific fraud and fudged data for the purpose of financial gain ..."

So, we continue to write about this subject, long after it should have vanished from our consciousness.

And as long as we must still write about it, we might as well do a good job of it. Alex Berezow over at RealClearScience does that, and more.

His new piece entitled "[Macaque Experiment Shows Vaccine Schedule Not Linked to Autism](#)," <sup>[1]</sup> discusses experiments in macaque monkeys that not only convincingly puts the autism nonsense to rest, but also the accompanying myths about thimerosal and immune system overload, both of which still play a part in the anti-vaccine movement.

Berezow, addressing Donald Trump's recent ignorant remarks, which reprised just about every vaccine myth in the book says, "this dangerous fiction was debunked as early as 2002 by the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and has been consistently contradicted by research ever since. As a result, anti-vaxxers changed strategy: Instead of blaming thimerosal for causing autism, they now focus on the vaccine schedule itself, essentially claiming that too many shots in too short of a timespan overwhelms a child's immune system."

(I [recently graded](#) <sup>[3]</sup> the three GOP candidates who spoke about vaccine during the last big debate. Take a look; it wasn't pretty).

Berezow analyzes a [new study](#) [4] published in PNAS by Dr. Bharathi S. Gadad and colleagues, in which macaques are subjected to vaccination protocols that vary by timing, as well as the absence or presence of the former (?) villain, the preservative thimerosal.

The vaccination protocols in the monkey studies matched those that were either given to children in the past, or at present:

**Control:** Saline placebos only

**1990s Pediatric:** The 1990s vaccine regimen for children

**1990s Primate:** A four-fold acceleration of the 1990s regimen

**TCVs:** Only thimerosal-containing vaccines, but MMR replaced with saline placebo

**MMR:** MMR only and saline placebos for other vaccines

**2008:** The 2008 vaccine regimen for children (which is similar to that used today)

Berezow concludes: "After all shots were administered, the macaques' behavior was assessed and their brains were examined for signs of autism. What did they find?"

"Nothing. Absolutely nothing. There were neither significant differences in brain structure nor significant differences in the negative behaviors associated with autism. In other words, all the monkeys developed normally."

The experiment also covered the latest (and lamest) argument against vaccines: That giving so many shots over such a short period of time (even Ron Paul a physician agreed with this nonsense!) will overwhelm the immune system of children.

With the help of our former trustee Dr. Paul Offit, we have written about this quite often. Dr. Offit's message is unwavering and dead-on accurate: "The shots kids receive (even when they get several at once) are less than a drop in the bucket in terms of what their immune systems can handle."

I strongly encourage you to read Berezow's piece, which is linked above. It thoroughly and clearly disposes of the vaccine myths that persist, science be damned.

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**Links**

[1]

[http://www.realclearscience.com/journal\\_club/2015/09/28/macaque\\_experiment\\_shows\\_vaccine\\_schedule\\_not\\_linked](http://www.realclearscience.com/journal_club/2015/09/28/macaque_experiment_shows_vaccine_schedule_not_linked)

[2] <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa021134>

[3] [http://www.science20.com/pfired\\_but\\_still\\_kicking/grading\\_the\\_gop\\_candidates\\_on\\_vaccines-157196](http://www.science20.com/pfired_but_still_kicking/grading_the_gop_candidates_on_vaccines-157196)

[4] <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2015/09/24/1500968112>