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## Vaccine Safety


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### CDC Statement Regarding 2004 Pediatrics Article, "Age at First Measles-Mumps-Rubella Vaccination in Children With Autism and School-matched Control Subjects: A Population-Based Study in Metropolitan Atlanta"

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CDC shares with parents and others great concern about the number of children with autism spectrum disorder.

CDC is committed to continuing to provide essential data on autism, search for factors that put children at risk for autism and look for possible causes. While doing so, we work to develop resources that help identify children with autism as early as possible so they can benefit from intervention services.

CDC's study (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/113/2/259.full.html>)  (<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>) about age at first Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccination and autism, published in *Pediatrics* in 2004, included boys and girls from different ethnic groups, including black children. The manuscript presented the results on two sets of children:

1. All children who were initially recruited for the study, and
2. the subset of children who had a Georgia birth certificate.

Access to the information on the birth certificates allowed researchers to assess more complete information on race as well as other important characteristics, including possible risk factors for autism such as the child's birth weight, mother's age, and education. This information was not available for the children without birth certificates; hence CDC study did not present data by race on black, white, or other race children from the whole study sample. It presented the results on black and white/other race children from the group with birth certificates.

The study looked at different age groups: children vaccinated by 18 months, 24 months, and 36 months. The findings revealed that vaccination between 24 and 36 months was slightly more common among children with autism, and that association was strongest among children 3-5 years of age. The authors reported this finding was most likely a result of immunization requirements for preschool special education program attendance in children with autism.

The data CDC collected for this study continue to be available for analysis by others. CDC welcomes analysis by others that can be submitted for peer-review and publication. For more information on how to access this public-use dataset please go to the [this webpage \(/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/maddsp-data-sets.html\)](http://ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/maddsp-data-sets.html).

Additional studies and a more recent rigorous review by the Institute of Medicine have found that

MMR vaccine does not increase the risk of autism.

Vaccines protect the health of children in the United States so well that most parents today have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences of diseases now stopped by vaccines.

However, our 2014 measles count is the highest number since measles was declared eliminated in 2000. We do not want to lose any opportunity to protect all of our children when we have the means to do so.

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Page last reviewed: August 25, 2014

Page last modified: August 25, 2014

Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)

Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion (DHQP)

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Road Atlanta, GA 30329-4027,

USA

800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348 - Contact CDC-INFO

