



Vaccines & Public Opinion: What Polling Tells Us

VacciNATION

**Partnership to Fight
Infectious Disease**

January 2025

PFID AND VACCINATION OVERVIEW



PFID launched in 2020 with a focus on educating on and advocating for policies to address antimicrobial resistance.



As the COVID-19 pandemic progressed, PFID launched VacciNATION to help address misinformation around the vaccines.



PFID produced materials and PSAs with policymakers to help share resources on the safety and importance of vaccines.



PFID is working to understand the evolution of vaccine skepticism in recent years and seeks opportunities to educate about the importance and future of vaccines.

KEY POLL FINDINGS – JANUARY 2025!

- **74%** of American voters believe the U.S. should prioritize ensuring **FDA-approved vaccines are widely available** for everyone.
- **81%** of voters say it is important for the **U.S. to remain a leader** in developing new vaccines.
- **88%** of respondents with children under age 18 say their children typically get vaccines their doctor or healthcare provider recommends.
- **Nearly 70%** of respondents expressed concern over declining vaccination rates among children in the US.



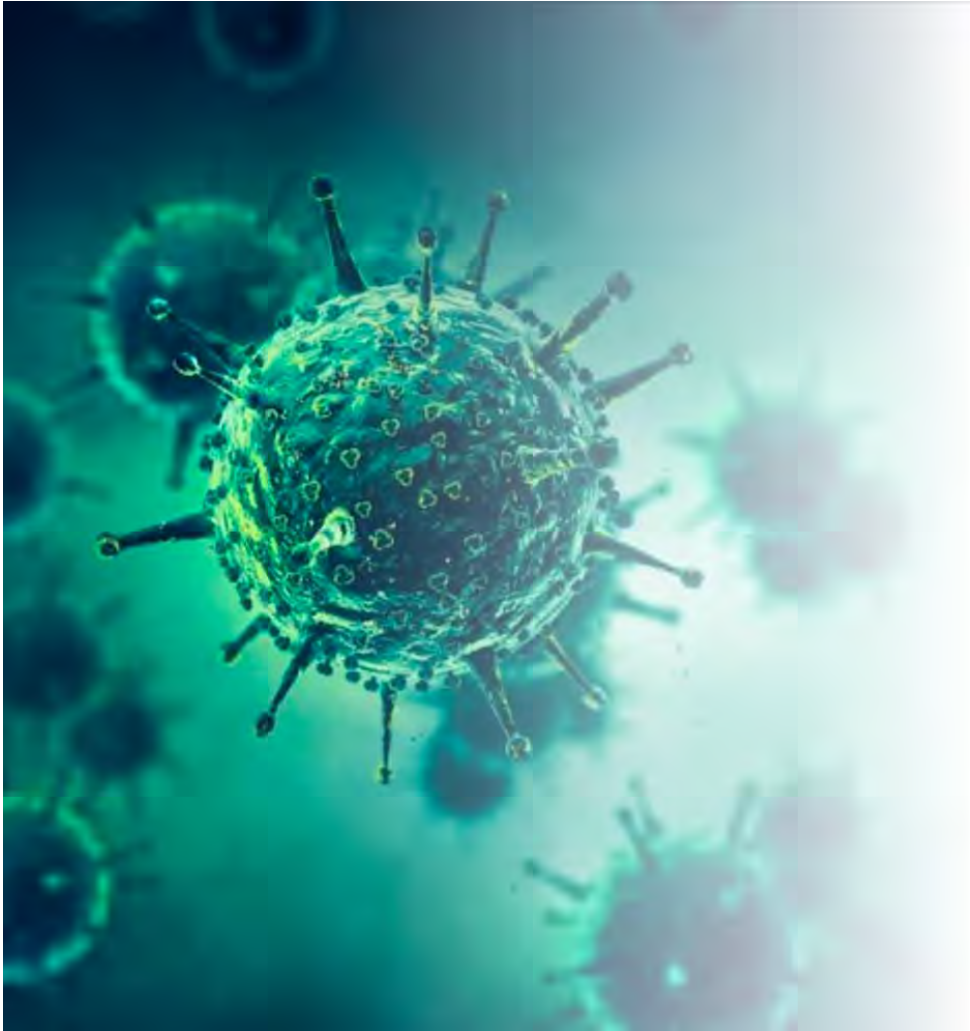
KEY POLL FINDINGS FROM JANUARY 2025

Americans give the most weight to their doctors' input on vaccines (78%) and independent doctors and scientists who evaluate vaccines (72%). 74% of Americans voters want US HHS to maintain FDA approval of the polio vaccine and other vaccines to keep them available in the US.

There is greater intensity around vaccinating children compared to adults with 88% of respondents saying their children often get vaccines that are recommended for them by their doctor or other health care provider whereas 77% of respondents often get vaccines recommended for themselves by their doctor or other health care provider.

There is interest in potential new vaccines with 72% of respondents stating they would be likely to seriously consider getting a new vaccine in development for Alzheimer's, HIV/AIDS, Parkinson's, Lyme and certain common types of cancers.





Key Findings: Overview

- Voters **generally have favorable views** toward doctors, medicine, and vaccines.
- However, the findings reveal a **growing divide amongst the American public on perceptions of vaccine safety and vaccine acceptance**.
 - This divide largely falls along partisan lines, with **Republican voters having more skeptical views** and being significantly less likely to accept current and future vaccines than Democrats.
 - **Independents' views vary**, but tend to fall in the middle of the spectrum.
- Voters across demographics are interested in new vaccines in development and **believe it is important for the US to remain a global leader in vaccine development**.

Key Findings: Vaccine-Related Values

- Most people find **protecting themselves** to be the most compelling reason to get vaccinated, followed by **protecting their families or others they care about**.
 - Voters do see the more abstract concepts of protecting the vulnerable or others in your community as important, but **less compelling than protecting those they know personally**.
- By far, the most compelling reason not to get vaccinated is **concern about serious and long-term health impacts**.
 - Many vaccine-skeptical voters want to wait and see for themselves that a new vaccine is safe before they would be willing to get it.
- In a set of forced choice statements about vaccination, **the pro-vaccine statements all win decisively across the board**. Among Democrats pro-vaccine views are dominant, while the anti-vaccine arguments are more competitive among Republicans.
 - Majorities across party identification decisively believe that **some vaccinations should be required for children to attend school**.
 - Voters believe that **vaccines that reduce the risk of serious illness are worth getting, even if some people with the vaccine still get a milder version of the disease**. Democrats and independents decisively agree, while Republicans are split.
 - Voters believe that **even healthy people should get recommended vaccines to avoid spreading infections to more vulnerable people in their communities who could get sicker**. Democrats and independents decisively agree, while a majority of Republicans believe vaccines are ultimately a personal decision.



Key Findings: Communication & Messaging

- Voters strongly agree that **vaccines protect communities from dangerous outbreaks of disease, more widespread vaccination means more immunity and better community safety, and healthy people should get vaccines to protect others** in their communities.
 - These statements all rank in the top tier across party lines and are helpful building blocks from which to develop messaging, though there are **significant differences in the level of agreement by party.**
- **People's own doctors are by far their most trusted messengers** on vaccines and other health-related issues.

- **Using analogies to explain vaccines:**

- Installing anti-virus software to detect and shut down computer viruses before they cause problems
- Trains your body to recognize and attack diseases like an army trains to prepare for battle

EMPHASIZING THE HISTORY AND SUCCESS OF VACCINES

THE 411 ON VACCINES

Vaccines are a critical element of primary prevention and protection against infection and illnesses. They work by "teaching" the immune system to recognize and eliminate pathogens so that our bodies are prepared to fight off infection if we are exposed and we avoid serious illness and spreading infection to others.

Through its VaccinATION efforts, the Partnership to Fight Infectious Disease is working to ensure that individuals can get the latest information about vaccines for a number of preventable illnesses.

1 Vaccines have conquered disease over time.

Wide use of vaccines has helped us virtually eliminate many diseases, such as whooping cough, polio, measles and rubella among others. Before vaccines, many of these diseases caused serious illness, disability and death, particularly among the young and the elderly. Though much less common in the U.S. today, keeping these diseases at bay requires continued or consistently high vaccination rates.

https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/downloads/forget_14_diseases.html

Pre-vaccine: 3044 cases per million per year (1951-52)

99.99% Reduction

Post-vaccine: 0.2 cases per million per year

<https://www.worldometers.org/vaccination>

2 Vaccines made available to the public are safe and effective.

Vaccine use is widespread around the world, and people have been getting vaccinated against deadly diseases for more than 200 years – since the world's first vaccine was developed against smallpox. In order to generate enough scientific data to meet the FDA's strict requirements for safety and effectiveness, vaccines are evaluated in clinical trials with thousands of study participants. Experts agree that we can feel confident that all vaccines have met the United States' extremely high standards for quality and safety, and continue to be monitored after approval.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccine/safety/>

3 Vaccines protect infants to older adults.

The CDC's recommended immunization schedule takes into account how the immune system responds to vaccines at various stages of life. Vaccinations start soon after birth to provide the best long-term protection. Additional vaccines given throughout childhood, for teenagers and adults of all ages are important because immunity from childhood vaccines could wear off over time, making it harder to fight off infection. People of all ages can also benefit from vaccine protection against seasonal viruses including influenza and coronavirus, where the strains circulating may vary year to year. Also, vaccines are available for older adults to protect against pneumonia, shingles, RSV and other infectious illnesses. Talk to a health care provider about the recommended schedule for you.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adult/index.html>

Safe and effective vaccines are a critical step forward to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our communities by preventing the spread of illnesses.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.FIGHTINFECTIOUSDISEASE.ORG.

VACCINES: Preventing Disease, Saving Lives and Reducing Healthcare Costs Over Time

Vaccines help our immune systems recognize and fight off bacteria and viruses that can make us sick and spread to others. Vaccines have been around since the 1700s and the decades of vaccine research since have led to the many safe and effective vaccines that we have today.

Vaccines Progress over Time

- 1770 Term "vaccine" first used by Edward Jenner in work on smallpox vaccine.
- 1800 Smallpox vaccine commonly used.
- 1879 Doctor Louis Pasteur created a vaccine using a weakened form of bacteria (chicken cholera).
- 1885 Louis Pasteur first used rabies vaccine in humans.
- 1896 Cholera and typhoid vaccines first developed.
- 1897 The plague vaccine introduced.
- 1914 The typhoid vaccine and rabies vaccine first licensed in U.S.
- 1927 BCG (Bacille Calmette-Guérin) vaccine first used in newborns, representing the only vaccine against TB (tuberculosis).
- 1930 Cell culture developed to be able to grow viruses, thus paving the way for the subsequent production of vaccines targeting viruses.
- 1942 The influenza A/B vaccine introduced.
- 1953 Tetanus, diphtheria, yellow fever vaccines first licensed in U.S.
- 1952 60,000 cases of polio in U.S. with 21,000 cases causing paralysis. Within 5 years of vaccine availability in U.S. only 41 cases of polio resulted in paralysis.
- 1955 Polio Vaccination Assistance Act enacted in U.S. First polio vaccine licensed—in inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV).
- 1961-1963 Multiple polio vaccines developed and licensed in U.S.
- 1965 First measles vaccine licensed in the U.S.
- 1967 Mumps vaccine licensed.
- 1969 Three rubella vaccines licensed.
- 1971 Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine licensed in the U.S.
- 1974 First meningitis vaccine licensed.
- 1977 First pneumonia vaccine licensed.
- 1979 Last cases of polio reported in U.S.
- 1980 Smallpox first disease eradicated by vaccines.
- 1981 First hep B vaccine licensed.
- 2000 Measles and rubella no longer endemic in U.S.

www.fightinfectiousdisease.org/vaccination

BUILDING EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF VACCINES

INNOVATIVE VACCINE R&D HOLDS SIGNIFICANT PROMISE in Fight Against Infectious and Chronic Diseases

VaccinATION
Partnership to Fight
Infectious Disease

Vaccines have successfully protected people from a host of infectious diseases that once spread unchecked, causing serious illness and death for generations.

Today, vaccine research and development is breaking new ground in tackling some of our most difficult health challenges.

Vaccines are being studied to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and protect against severe illness from these pathogens. They are also now being studied as potential treatments for a wide range of conditions, including cancer.

VACCINES IN DEVELOPMENT

Research area	Addressing unmet needs	Disease areas with vaccines in development include
Infectious illnesses	More than 13 million people a year die from infectious illnesses; most are under age 5.	HIV, gonorrhea, herpes, norovirus, Epstein-Barr virus, malaria, salmonella, tuberculosis, Ebola, Rift Valley Fever, Zika
Cancers (Existing vaccines protect against viruses associated with liver and cervical cancers)	Many cancer vaccines in development are therapeutic and act to enhance treatment for cancers already diagnosed and prevent cancer recurrence.	Adenomas, leukemias, lymphomas, solid tumors, and brain, breast, colorectal, gastric, liver, lung, melanoma, pancreatic, sarcoma, and uterine cancers
Many non-communicable diseases	Vaccines for diseases not associated with an infectious cause target the underlying causes of chronic conditions—for example, brain plaque development in Alzheimer's disease. ¹	Addiction, Alzheimer's disease, arthritis, asthma, Crohn's disease, Type 1 diabetes, high blood pressure, multiple sclerosis, obesity, and psoriasis

Vaccine research and development is concentrated in the United States. Private companies are developing more than two out of three potential vaccines either independently or collaboratively with academic or other non-profit organizations developing the remaining candidates.²

Lowering the prevalence of severe illness not only protects patients and families but can also reduce overall costs—from time away from work or school to less need for hospital stays and doctor visits for preventable illnesses. Development of new vaccines expands our toolkit of safe and effective measures to prevent many kinds of infectious and other diseases.

¹Wolanski E, Borsook R, et al. Summary of the Current Status of DNA Vaccines for Infectious Diseases. *Vaccines (Basel)*. 2021 Nov 16;9(11):1708. Available online: <https://doi.org/10.3390/v9111708>

²Lee A, Liu W, et al. The COVID-19 landscape for infectious disease vaccine research. *Vaccine*. July 2021. Available online: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/S0264275821005000>

AND HIGHLIGHTING THE RISKS OF GOING BACKWARD



Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) are exceptionally contagious diseases that can lead to severe illness, neurological complications, lifelong disability, and death. Young children, pregnant women, and the babies they carry are at high risk. All three viruses when caught during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects. But thanks to the development and widespread adoption of vaccines, the threat of measles, mumps, and rubella today is negligible.

However, measles, mumps, and rubella will circulate again, leading to outbreaks, if vaccination rates fall below certain levels.



The Future of MMR Vaccinations

The measles vaccine has averted an estimated **60 million measles deaths** between 2000 and 2023.²

Without the measles vaccine, approximately **800,000 people would die** per year, most children under 5 years old.³

Vaccines **eliminated rubella in 81 countries**

but it would resurge and cause miscarriages, still births, and serious abnormalities in unborn babies if immunization rates decline.⁴

Safe and effective vaccines are essential to protecting ourselves, our loved ones, and our communities by thwarting resurgence of preventable diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella.

Visit fightinfectiousdisease.org to learn more.

www.fightinfectiousdisease.org/vaccination

EMERGING CHALLENGES

- Increased volume of anti-vaccine rhetoric & distrust of government
- Disease outbreaks: potential impact on hesitancy and population immunity
- “Pro-safety” and implications that safety is an issue
- Significant loss of trust in FDA and CDC with large partisan divides
- Perception that individual immunization decisions do not affect others’ health (so MYOB)
- Perceptions of risk vs benefit with lack of disease experience
- Linkages between food as medicine and vaccine-critical movements to mainstream anti-vaccine messages
- Concerning minority of people believe there is “credible evidence” of link with autism (partisan differences)

