

Online Appendix

[*Autism correction*]

Please examine the following information about measles, mumps, and rubella carefully.

All children should be vaccinated for measles, mumps, and rubella. The measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine (MMR) is safe and effective.

Because signs of autism may appear around the same time children receive the MMR vaccine, some parents may worry that the vaccine causes autism. Vaccine safety experts, including experts at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics, agree that MMR vaccine is not responsible for recent increases in the number of children with autism. A 2004 Institute of Medicine report concluded that there is no link between autism and MMR vaccine, and that there is no link between autism and vaccines that contain thimerosal as a preservative.

Many scientific studies have found no link between MMR vaccine and autism. These studies include:

- A September 2008 study published in *Public Library of Science* was conducted to determine whether results from an earlier study claiming to find measles virus RNA in the intestinal tissue of autistic children could be confirmed. The results could not be confirmed, and no link between MMR and autism was found.
- A 2006 study published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* of 351 children with autism and 31 typically-developing children did not find a link between MMR vaccination and autism.
- A 2002 study by CDC in the *New England Journal of Medicine* followed more than 500,000 children and found no association between MMR vaccination and autism.

[*Disease risks*]

Please examine the following information about measles, mumps, and rubella carefully.

All children should be vaccinated for measles, mumps, and rubella. These are serious diseases.

Measles

-Measles virus causes rash, cough, runny nose, eye irritation, and fever.

-It can lead to ear infection, pneumonia, seizures (jerking and staring), brain damage, and death.

Mumps

-Mumps virus causes fever, headache, and swollen glands.

-It can lead to deafness, meningitis (infection of the brain and spinal cord covering), painful swelling of the testicles or ovaries, and, rarely, death.

Rubella (German Measles)

-Rubella virus causes rash, mild fever, and arthritis (mostly in women).

-If a woman gets rubella while she is pregnant, she could have a miscarriage or her baby could be born with serious birth defects.

You or your child could catch these diseases by being around someone who has them. They spread from person to person through the air.

Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine can prevent these diseases. Most children who get their MMR shots will not get these diseases. Many more children would get them if we stopped vaccinating.

[Disease narrative]

Please examine the following information about measles, mumps, and rubella carefully.

All children should be vaccinated for measles, mumps, and rubella. This is a true story that shows why vaccination is so important.

If you hear “106 degrees” you probably think “heat wave,” not a baby’s temperature. But for Megan Campbell’s 10-month-old son, a life-threatening bout of measles caused fevers spiking to 106 degrees and sent him to the hospital.

“We spent 3 days in the hospital fearing we might lose our baby boy,” Campbell said. “He couldn’t drink or eat, so he was on an IV, and for a while he seemed to be wasting away. When he could drink again, we got to take him home. But the doctors told us to expect the disease to continue to run its course, including high fever – which spiked as high as 106 degrees. We spent a week waking at all hours and soothing him with damp washcloths.”

Thankfully, the baby recovered fully.

Megan now knows that her son was exposed to measles when another mother brought her ill son into their pediatrician’s waiting room.

[Disease images]

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Because of advances in public health, most people in the United States have never had measles, mumps, and rubella or seen a child with these diseases. Please look at these pictures of children with the diseases before proceeding.

Measles



Mumps



Rubella



[Control]

Please examine the following information about bird feeding carefully.

Q: What are the costs and benefits of bird feeding?

A: It is difficult to assess the costs and benefits of bird feeding because it is difficult to compare the health of birds without access to feeders with birds that frequent feeders. Only one study was able to obtain some sound results. That study found that any benefits of feeding only appear to occur sporadically under extreme climactic conditions. No research has been able to demonstrate a cost. Aside from costs and benefits to birds, there is a cost and benefit to humanity. The costs are obvious – the expense of bird feeding supplies.

The benefits include learning more about birds and the joy of connecting with the natural world. Bird feeding provides a direct, intimate view of the natural world for more than 50 million Americans who feed the birds in their yards. It is most popular in winter, when birds seem to need the most help. Some people worry that birds will suffer unless they make great efforts to the feeder filled, but research indicates that most birds do not depend on feeders.