



No Evidence of a Link Between Tylenol and Autism: Protecting Mothers with Science, Not Fear

Wichita, Kansas – Please see my statement on the administration's Autism announcement.

Administration's Claim and Context

On September 22, 2025, the White House announced an autism initiative in which President Trump warned pregnant women, “Don’t take Tylenol...Fight like hell not to take it” (Associated Press [AP], 2025). He claimed the FDA would notify doctors that acetaminophen “can be associated” with an increased autism risk (AP, 2025). These claims were made without citing robust evidence. Officials simply cited observational studies that reported *statistical associations* between acetaminophen use and autism (PolitiFact, 2025), framing them as proof of causation. Medical experts immediately rejected this reasoning. NYU bioethicist Art Caplan called it “a display of a lack of evidence, rumors, recycling old myths, lousy advice, outright lies, and dangerous advice” (Nature, 2025).

Flawed Evidence and Misinterpretation

The research cited by the administration consists mostly of observational studies prone to bias and confounding. For example, a Swedish analysis of 2.5 million births found autism in 1.42% of acetaminophen-exposed children versus 1.33% in unexposed—a “very small” difference (PolitiFact, 2025). Such data cannot prove causation. Experts note that women who take Tylenol often do so because of fevers, which themselves can affect fetal development (PolitiFact, 2025). After decades of study, no research has demonstrated acetaminophen *causes* autism (PolitiFact, 2025).

Medical Consensus and Official Guidance

Leading medical organizations reject the Tylenol-autism claim. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) stated that “not a single reputable study” has shown a causal link, and the two highest-quality studies found no significant associations with autism (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists [ACOG], 2025). The Society for



Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) likewise affirmed that acetaminophen has not been shown to increase autism risk (Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine [SMFM], 2025).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continue to recommend acetaminophen as the safest pain reliever in pregnancy (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2024; FDA, 2025). Untreated fever poses clear risks, including birth defects, making Tylenol a vital treatment option (PolitiFact, 2025). Physicians recommend using the lowest effective dose for the shortest necessary time (Cleveland Clinic, 2023).

The Danger of Misinformation

Spreading unproven health claims from the presidential podium risks confusing and frightening the public. ACOG President Dr. Steven Fleischman called the Tylenol-autism suggestion “irresponsible” and “dangerous and confusing” (AP, 2025). Without Tylenol, pregnant women may resort to riskier drugs like ibuprofen or aspirin, which are known to cause pregnancy complications (CBS News, 2025).

Conclusion and Public Health Guidance

The scientific consensus is clear: acetaminophen is safe when used appropriately in pregnancy. No credible evidence shows it causes autism. Pregnant women should continue to follow established medical guidance, using acetaminophen when clinically necessary and consulting their healthcare providers. The facts remain: when taken properly, Tylenol is both safe and important for maternal and fetal health (CDC, 2024; FDA, 2025).

References

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