

WHO sees no autism links to Tylenol, vaccines

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● Jasaravic said: "Vaccines do not cause autism."

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

Neither the painkiller Tylenol nor vaccines have been shown to cause autism, the World Health Organization said yesterday, following comments from the US president and his administration to the contrary.

President Donald Trump insisted on Monday that pregnant women should "tough it out" and avoid Tylenol due to an unproven link to autism and also urged major changes to the standard vaccines administered to babies.

Medical groups have long cited acetaminophen, or paracetamol -- the primary ingredient in Tylenol -- as among the safest painkillers to take during pregnancy.

WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic acknowledged that some observational studies -- which are based purely on observations and do not include control or treatment groups -- had "suggested a possible association between prenatal exposure to acetaminophen or paracetamol and autism".

But, he told reporters in Geneva, "the evidence remains inconsistent" with other studies finding "no such relationship".

"If the link between acetaminophen and autism were strong, it would likely have been consistently observed across multiple studies," he said, warning against "drawing casual conclusions about the role of acetaminophen in autism".

'No evidence'

European medical regulators meanwhile said their recommendations that pregnant women can use paracetamol for pain

relief had not changed.

"Patient safety is our top priority. There is no evidence that taking paracetamol during pregnancy causes autism in children," Alison Cave, safety chief at Britain's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), said in a statement.

Steffen Thirstrup, chief medical officer at the European Medicines Agency, agreed.

"Our advice is based on a rigorous assessment of the available scientific data and we have found no evidence that taking paracetamol during pregnancy causes autism in children," he said.

Vaccines were also on the rambling agenda of Trump's press conference on Monday, when he repeated anti-vax movement talking points.

He sowed doubt over standard vaccines including the MMR shot -- which covers measles, mumps and rubella -- and implied he would end the common use of aluminium in vaccines, the safety of which has been widely studied.

Identifying the root of autism

-- a complex condition connected to brain development that many experts believe occurs for predominantly genetic reasons -- has been a pet cause of Trump's health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Kennedy has for decades spread claims that vaccines cause autism.

'Vaccine schedules evolve with science'

Asked about the fears raised by the US president and his administration over childhood vaccines, Jasaravic said: "Vaccines do not cause autism."

"The childhood immunisation schedule, carefully guided by WHO, has been adopted by all countries and has saved at least 154 million lives over the past 50 years," he added.

"These schedules have continually evolved with science and now safeguard children, adolescents and adults against 30 infectious diseases," he said.

He warned, however, that "when immunisation schedules are delayed or disrupted, or altered without evidence review,



there is a sharp increase in the risk of infection not only for the child but also for the wider community".

"Each missed dose increases the chances of contracting a life-threatening infectious disease."

The WHO spokesman said that 62 million people were known to be living with autism spectrum

disorder worldwide.

The global community needed to do more, he acknowledged, "to understand the causes of autism and how best to care for and support the needs of autistic people and their families".

But science had "proven" there was no link to vaccines, he said, adding: "These things should not really be questioned."



The exact cause of autism is still not fully understood, but research shows it results from a combination of genetic and environmental factors that affect early brain development

Genetic factors: Autism tends to run in families. Certain gene changes (mutations) have been linked to a higher likelihood of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Brain development: Differences in how brain networks are formed and connected appear very early in life, even before clear symptoms show.

Environmental influences: Things like advanced parental age, pregnancy complications, low birth weight, or exposure to certain toxins or infections during pregnancy may increase risk.

Trump mocks UN on peace and migration in blistering return

● Trump called recognition by a slate of Washington's allies of a Palestinian state a "reward" to armed group Hamas for "horrible atrocities"

● He lambasted the UN for "funding an assault" on Western nations.

AFP | United Nations, United States

US President Donald Trump relentlessly mocked the United Nations on Tuesday in his first address since his White House comeback, blasting it for failing to bring peace and claiming the world body encourages illegal migration.



What is the purpose of the United Nations? All they seem to do is write a really strongly worded letter," he said. "It's empty words, and empty words don't solve war"

DONALD TRUMP

In his return to the UN General Assembly podium, Trump accused the UN of

fostering an "assault" through migration on Western countries that he said were "going to hell."

He likewise used the major forum to denounce efforts to reduce global warming, calling climate change concerns "the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world."

"What is the purpose of the United Nations?" asked Trump.

"All they seem to do is write a really strongly worded letter," he said. "It's empty words, and empty words don't solve war"

The 79-year-old even complained about a broken escalator and teleprompter at the New York headquarters of the UN, which he has repeatedly targeted during both of his presiden-

tial terms.

"This is these are the two things I got from the United Nations, a bad escalator and a bad teleprompter," he said.

Touting what he said were his efforts to end seven wars, Trump turned to two where his outreach has produced no results -- Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Israel's war in Gaza following Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack.

He called recognition by a slate of Washington's allies of a Palestinian state a "reward" to armed group Hamas for "horrible atrocities" and urged the group to release hostages to reach peace.

Trump lashed out at European allies, as well as China and India, for failing to stop oil purchases from Russia, while remaining relatively restrained on Moscow even as he said Washington was ready to impose unspecified sanctions.

Some of his strongest language was reserved for migration as he lambasted the UN for "funding an assault" on Western nations.

"It's time to end the failed experiment of open borders,"

Trump said. "Your countries are going to hell," he said, also attacking London's Mayor Sadiq Khan, the first Muslim mayor of a Western capital.

'Wreaking havoc'

Trump's second term has opened with a blaze of nationalist policies curbing cooperation with the rest of the world.

He has moved to pull the United States out of the World Health Organization and the UN climate pact, severely curtailed US development assistance and wielded sanctions against foreign judges over rulings he sees as violating sovereignty.

Opening the annual summit, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that aid cuts led by the United States were "wreaking havoc" in the world.

"What kind of world will we choose? A world of raw power -- or a world of laws?" Guterres said.

but yielded no breakthrough on Ukraine.

Despite Trump's insistence that he can broker a quick end to the war, Russia has not only kept up its barrage of attacks on Ukraine in the past month but rattled nerves with drone or air incursions in NATO members Poland, Estonia and Romania.

Trump said last week that Putin had "really let me down."

One of Trump's few other one-on-one meetings will be with Argentina's right-wing President Javier Milei, an ideological ally to whose government the United States is considering offering an economic lifeline.

Ahead of his visit to the UN district, swarming with heavily armed police and agents and crisscrossed with barricades and road closures, the US Secret Service said they had disrupted a "telecommunications-related" plot.

The Secret Service said it a weaponized farm of more than 100,000 cellphone SIM cards that was capable of blocking communications around the UN, and that it "nation-state threat actors" were involved.