

Ontarians said they want to be vaccinated immediately, one in seven said they will not seek the vaccine.

While there are a variety of cultural, political and societal factors that contribute to vaccine hesitancy, misinformation surrounding vaccines doesn't help.

Ian Culbert, executive director of the Canadian Public Health Association, debunks some of the prevailing myths surrounding vaccines.

## Myth: Vaccines cause autism spectrum disorder

Culbert said this myth, like many surrounding vaccines, relates to children, since many vaccines are intended for children.

"The number one myth that will not go away is that the measles, mumps, rubella vaccine causes autism, and this is absolutely false. There is no scientific evidence to support this claim," he said.

Another myth linking vaccines to autism states that giving too many vaccines to children can trigger the disorder.

"There's no evidence to link any other vaccines to autism," he said. "And while the number of kids being diagnosed on the spectrum is increasing, this is more because the diagnostic methods now diagnose children with milder symptoms, and there's much greater awareness."

## Myth: New vaccines are approved without rigorous testing

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Culbert said the fear that vaccines aren't safe, that they're not adequately tested for safety and are forced through the approval process, is especially relevant now, as the first COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada are administered throughout Ontario. Nonetheless, it isn't based in fact.