

Opinion: Covid-19 vaccine misinformation continues to erode confidence | The Washington Post

By Editorial Board

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“Freaking miracle.” That’s how health journalist Helen Branswell recently described the vaccines that have saved millions of lives in the coronavirus pandemic. The vaccines, offered to the U.S. population, have proved to be 90 percent effective against infection. Ready within a year of the outbreak, they have proved to be safe. And they are widely available and free. There is no parallel in modern times.

Yet, some people chose to believe otherwise. In a just-published nationwide survey of 18,782 people across all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the Covid States Project asked about four vaccine misinformation claims, asking respondents whether they were “true” or “false” or if a respondent was “not sure.” Five percent said they thought that vaccines contained microchips; 7 percent said vaccines used aborted fetal cells; 8 percent said the vaccines could alter human DNA; and 10 percent were concerned that vaccines could cause infertility. Forty-six percent were uncertain about the veracity of at least one of the four false statements.

The survey shows how misinformation about vaccines continues to erode confidence in them. What kind of message is sent when Fox News host Tucker Carlson compares coronavirus vaccine mandates to medical experiments conducted by Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, as he did Jan. 21?

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