

Why social media hasn't been able to shut down vaccine misinformation | POLITICO

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Anti-vaccination movements are not new to the online landscape, and tech platforms have long been grappling with how to handle them. But false claims and conspiracies about Covid vaccines are already looking more difficult to police than those social media companies have had to deal with in the past.

Part of the trouble is that there is limited data about the coronavirus vaccines, making some narratives harder to refute than claims about vaccines that have been around for years — such as that childhood shots cause autism, which repeated studies over years have proven to be untrue. Even debunking unfounded claims about the Covid vaccines involves explaining a vaccine that operates by a new mechanism.

Another is that the outbreak arrived at a time when enormous communities distrusting of government have been growing online.

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