

Politics spoiling Americans' trust in COVID-19 vaccines

[H]ow can politicians convince large swathes of the American public to take a vaccine once it becomes available? The answer may be counterintuitive, but simple: Keep mum, and let the scientists and public-health experts share the facts with the American people.

In a [study](#) of American attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccination, just published in the Journal of the American Medical Association Network Open, we found that Americans' support for vaccination declines in the face of political involvement in the vaccine process.

A Trump endorsement dampens the likelihood that individuals will vaccinate (see Figure 1). A Biden endorsement fares no better statistically. Despite missteps by the [World Health Organization](#) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in responding to COVID-19, endorsements by either would be a more powerful lure for Americans than either a Trump or Biden endorsement.

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An effective public-health strategy should incorporate what we are learning about public attitudes toward the COVID-19 vaccine. And what we are learning clearly indicates that politics has no place in the vaccination process.

Efficacy

50% —

70% —

90% —

Protection Duration

1 year —

5 years —

Major Side Effects

1 in 10,000 —

1 in 1,000,000 —

Minor Side Effects

1 in 10 —

1 in 30 —

FDA Approval

Full Approval —

Emergency Use Authorization —

Figure 1: Vaccine attributes and preferences. Marginal mean willingness for each attribute refers to sub

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