

## YouTube bans Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Joseph Mercola and other anti-vaccine activists from spreading COVID disinformation

YouTube is taking down several video channels associated with high-profile anti-vaccine activists including Joseph Mercola and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who experts say are partially responsible for helping seed the skepticism that's contributed to slowing vaccination rates across the country.

As part of a new set of policies aimed at cutting down on anti-vaccine content on the Google-owned site, YouTube will ban any videos that claim that commonly used vaccines approved by health authorities are ineffective or dangerous.

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The change marks a shift for the social media giant, which streams more than 1 billion hours' worth of content every day. Like its peers Facebook and Twitter, the company has long resisted policing content too heavily, arguing maintaining an open platform is critical to free speech.

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YouTube's new policy will still allow people to make claims based on their own personal experience, like a mother talking about side effects her child experienced after getting a vaccine, [YouTube vice president of global trust and safety Matt] Halprin said. Scientific discussion of vaccines and posting about vaccines' historical failures or successes will also be allowed, he said.

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.\*\*](#)