

## ‘Unsafe, ineffective or unnecessary’: More than half of US dog owners embrace vaccine hesitancy

A new wave of vaccine suspicion has extended to our pets, [a new study found](#).

Published [27 August 2023] in the journal Vaccine, the study surveyed 2,200 people on their opinions regarding routine vaccinations given to pet dogs, specifically rabies vaccines.

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The results surprised Matt and Gabriella Motta, the brother-sister duo who conducted the study alongside co-researcher Dominik Stecula.

“We were pretty surprised because we knew that this phenomenon would exist, anecdotally we had good reason to believe that it was, but we were pretty stunned,” Matt Motta, a political scientist and researcher at Boston University’s School of Public Health, told USA TODAY. “The sheer volume of people who hold these opinions was quite striking...that, to me, is pretty alarming.”

The study also found the persistence of long-disproven vaccine myths that usually apply to humans, with nearly 40% of respondents expressing concern that vaccines could cause their dogs to develop autism.

“I believe the COVID-19 vaccine has fundamentally changed the way that Americans view vaccination in general,” said Motta. “I think alarmingly that could be spilling over to shape how people feel about attitude toward vaccinating their pets and frankly, who knows what else? You know, it could go even further.”

**[This is an excerpt. Read the full article here](#)**