

## Autism Ruling

**Carlotta Bradley:**

A legal victory for medical professionals who say childhood vaccines do not cause autism. A special federal court ruled Thursday that those inoculations are not to blame for neurological disorders, confirming what some doctors say they've known all along.

**Peter Hotez:**

Not only are the vaccines safe, but they're actually lifesaving. I mean, let's remember what we're using these vaccines for. We're using them to prevent measles. We're using them to prevent polio. We're using them to prevent, eh, pertussis, otherwise known as whooping cough. We're using them to prevent tetanus. These are the leading childhood killers in the world.

**Carlotta Bradley:**

The court concluded "the weight of scientific research and authority" was "simply more persuasive on nearly every point in contention." That decision was a blow to families who filed more than five thousand claims with the U.S. Court of Claims, alleging vaccines caused learning disabilities and other complications for their children. To win, they had to show it was more likely than not that the autism symptoms were directly related to the measles-mumps-rubella shots they received.

**Barbara Loe Fisher:**

This is an open question. It must remain so until the scientific studies have been, have been done and conclusively have, uh, found either way.

**Carlotta Bradley:**

Dr. Hotez says his teenage daughter is autistic. But he says he's satisfied with the clinical research and animal testing that's already been done.

**Peter Hotez:**

What's quite-quite clear is that autism is a genetic condition; it's a genetic disorder. Uh, and that goes along with the fact that there are major structural changes in the brain, and this is not something that vaccines are capable of doing. Indeed, it's not something that's, any toxin, uh, or-or a toxin would be, uh, a-a-able to do.

**Carlotta Bradley:**

Loe Fisher says she hopes Thursday's ruling is not a sign of what's to come.

**Barbara Loe Fisher:**

We need to continue to do the research and consider each of these claims that come before the court individually and not apply what happened today in a prejudicial way to those cases.

**Carlotta Bradley:**

The court still has to rule on separate claims from other families who contend that rather than a single vaccine, the culprit could be a mercury-containing preservative called thimerosal that once was common in children's vaccinations.

**Carlotta Bradley:**

Carlotta Bradley, The Associated Press.

© AP Archive. All rights reserved.