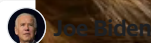
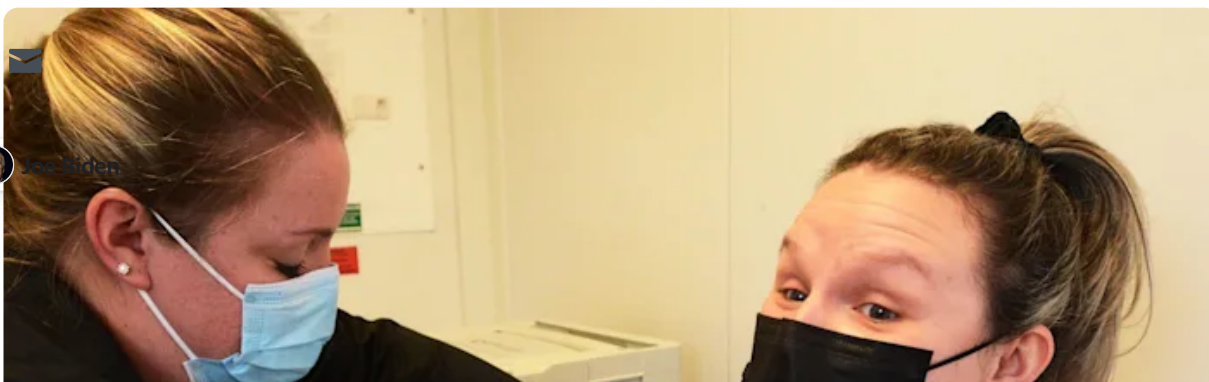




unvaccinated' motto did lasting harm



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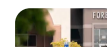
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Joe Biden

Two full years have come and gone since the COVID-19 pandemic came to the United States and turned things upside down. For most of us, life has now pretty much returned to normal. There's reason to hope that it will stay that way, too. At the time of this writing, COVID-19 hospitalizations in the United States have been decreasing in recent weeks, falling to levels that are as low as they've been since early in the pandemic. COVID-19 deaths also are decreasing dramatically, with a seven-day average of 525 per day, a 75%-plus drop from February.

We've learned a lot about things relative to this coronavirus and the pandemic it caused: Various treatments for the disease, public policy for its prevention and against its spread, the development and distribution of vaccines, and a lot of other matters as well. But a number of these matters need to be discussed with regard to what we did right and what we did wrong in response to the

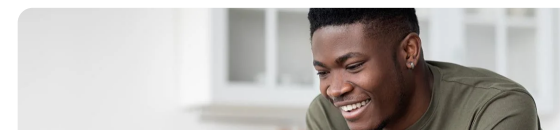


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A top US vaccine researcher says he doesn't 'blame' unvaccinated people for their skepticism: 'I can see where it can be...

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Joe Biden

pharmaceutical company Pfizer announced that data from clinical trials had demonstrated that its new vaccine was 95% effective one week after the second dose. By “effective,” they meant that the vaccinated individual was protected from infection for a period of time, and that was, no doubt, how it was understood by everyone who heard the news.

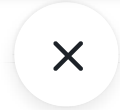
More: [We went back inside an Iowa ICU fighting another surge of COVID — plus fatigue and a staff shortage](#)

Joe Biden repeatedly blamed spread on the unvaccinated

By the following summer, President Joe Biden, unhappy with how many Americans were still unvaccinated, called the continued spread of the coronavirus a “pandemic of the unvaccinated.” The narrative was simple: Get vaccinated and you won’t get sick. Don’t get vaccinated and not only can you get sick, but you’ll be a threat to everybody else. I

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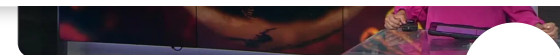
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Joe Biden

But it was enormously divisive to the country. It was also factually incorrect.

It's true that the vaccines are very effective in preventing hospitalization and death. The Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines, according a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine in October of 2021, were 89% effective in preventing hospitalizations. Other studies have shown that this "outcome protection" remains for several months. In January of this year, Dr. Dustin Krutsinger, assistant professor of medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, wrote to me that "...the only people I am seeing in my ICU (with COVID-19 are) people who are not 'fully vaccinated' (vax or booster within last 6 months) or transplant recipients who are heavily immunosuppressed." In short, the evidence I've seen, whether scientific or anecdotal, indicates that the vaccines have been highly successful in preventing bad outcomes from COVID-19 infections.



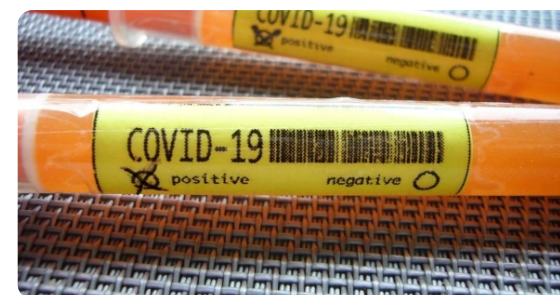
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Joe Biden

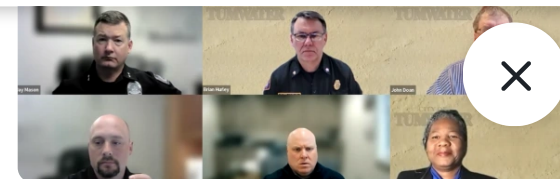
all, you weren't supposed to get sick in the first place. Breakthrough infections, the term used to describe infections of vaccinated people, were supposed to be rare.

Breakthrough infections turned out to be common

But they weren't particularly rare, certainly where the delta variant was concerned.

In September of 2021, a study led by the University of California-Davis Genome Center showed "no significant difference in viral load between vaccinated and unvaccinated people who tested positive for the delta variant of SARS-CoV-2."

Professor Richard Michelmore, director of the Genome Center, said "It's very important to get vaccinated, because vaccines greatly reduce the risk of severe disease, but you should not assume that because you are vaccinated you cannot get infected or transmit the disease to others."



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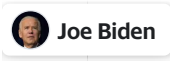


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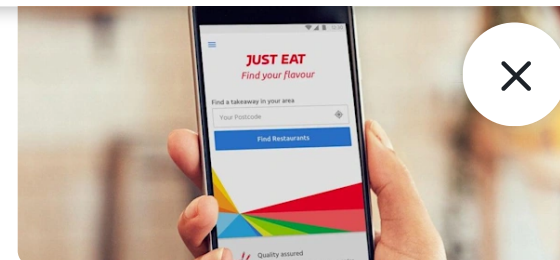


risk of becoming infected with the delta variant in the home compared with people who are unvaccinated. The authors stress that vaccination also reduces the risk of severe illness, hospitalisation and death from COVID-19. The analysis found that around 25% of vaccinated household contacts tested positive for COVID-19 compared to roughly 38% of unvaccinated contacts.”

More: [Get Iowa COVID case, deaths and data updates on this new dashboard after state's shut down](#)

Researchers urged US to change its messaging

The “pandemic of the unvaccinated” narrative should have fallen apart, but it didn’t. In November of 2021, Dr. Gunter Kampf of the University of Greifswald practically pleaded with both his native country of Germany and the United States to stop the stigmatization of the unvaccinated. [He wrote](#)



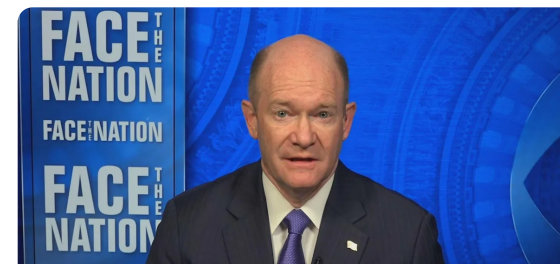
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therefore wrong and dangerous to speak of a pandemic of the unvaccinated... I call on high-level officials and scientists to stop the inappropriate stigmatisation of unvaccinated people, who include our patients, colleagues, and other fellow citizens, and to put extra effort into bringing society together.”

Perhaps some have listened to Kampf, but the damage had already been done. Between the politicians, the government officials, and the media, many Americans were made to be deeply afraid. And some were very angry at those who had chosen not to be vaccinated.

The fear was amply demonstrated in [polling done by The Brookings Institute late in 2020](#) in which 35% of all those polled (Democrats and Republicans alike) said that at least half of the people infected with COVID-19 required hospitalization. The actual number was somewhere between 1% and 5%.



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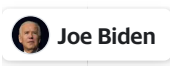


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In this instance by Rasmussen (and published in January of 2022), where the results indicated that Democratic voters in particular were willing to take some very extreme measures with regard to the unvaccinated:



- 59% of Democratic voters were in favor of required home confinement for those who refuse vaccination.
- 48% of Democrat voters thought “federal and state governments should be able to fine or imprison individuals who publicly question the efficacy of the existing COVID-19 vaccines on social media, television, radio, or in online or digital publications.”
- 45% of Democratic voters “would favor governments requiring citizens to temporarily live in designated facilities or locations if they refuse to get a COVID-19 vaccine.”

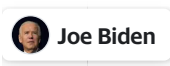
I found this absolutely horrifying. It’s bad enough

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erroneous views with respect to the protections offered by the vaccines makes this doubly bad.



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Meanwhile, Biden was still saying as late as January of this year that “This continues to be a pandemic of the unvaccinated.” This is, to say the least, unhelpful in the extreme. This sort of rhetoric hasn’t just divided the American people along party lines. It has divided co-workers, churches, friends, and families. It’s been sad to watch.

For me, both the strengths and limitations of the vaccines’ efficacy have been brought close to home. My fully-vaccinated daughter got COVID last Thanksgiving and recovered relatively quickly from what we assume to be the delta variant. My

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December and came down with COVID some six weeks later, this time with what we assume to be the omicron variant.

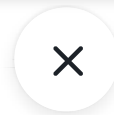


Brian Myers of Madrid is a senior contributor at CaffeinatedThoughts.com and former co-host of Caffeinated Thoughts Radio.

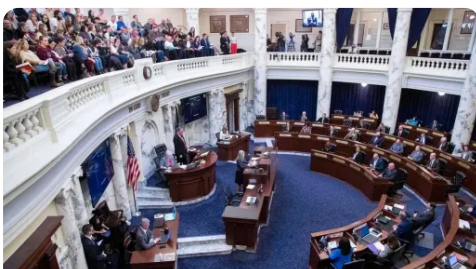


Joe Biden

This article originally appeared on Des Moines Register: [Opinion: False 'pandemic of the unvaccinated' motto did lasting harm](#)



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