

# White House Health Official Makes False Claim About COVID-19 Vaccines



A [White House](#) official made a false claim on June 20 about COVID-19 vaccines while encouraging parents to get their young children vaccinated.

Dr. [Ashish Jha](#), the White House's COVID-19 response coordinator, said that "there have not been any serious side effects of these vaccines."

Contrary to Jha's claim, severe allergic reactions, blood clotting, heart inflammation, and paralysis are among the

serious side effects [linked](#) to the three COVID-19 vaccines that are available in the United States.

"There is a well-documented risk of myocarditis from the COVID vaccine, especially in young men and adolescent boys, and an elevated risk of clotting in young women with the Moderna vaccine," Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, a professor of medicine at Stanford University, told The Epoch Times in an email.

"It's not right for government scientific advisers to downplay documented risks of the vaccine because it ultimately undermines confidence in public health."

White House officials didn't return a request for comment.

Jha, who recently took a post with the Biden administration and is on a break from being dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, was on a media tour on June 20 promoting COVID-19 vaccination for children younger than 5.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [authorized](#) the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for young children last week, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [recommended](#) that virtually every child who's now eligible get one of the vaccines.

Jha said the steps happened because the data on the

vaccines were “quite compellingly clear” and that the vaccines were both safe and effective, even though major questions have arisen about [their safety and efficacy](#).

“It’s really reassuring to know that for young kids, these vaccines are exceedingly safe,” Jha said.

Children in Moderna’s trial were [more likely to suffer](#) a severe adverse event after vaccination than after getting a placebo, while more vaccinated volunteers in Pfizer’s trial [experienced severe COVID-19 cases](#) when compared to the placebo group.

“The phrase ‘safe and effective’ has become meaningless and can no longer be trusted. It has been hijacked by commercial interests. A more accurate phrase would be ‘buyer beware,’” Kim Witczak, a drug safety advocate who started a group called Woody Matters, told The Epoch Times in a recent email after reviewing the data from the trials.

Jha also said the vaccines “are doing an extraordinary job at keeping kids out of the hospital.” While that appears to have been the case earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic, it may not be now, according to data presented during meetings with the government’s vaccine advisory panels last week.

For example, effectiveness against hospitalization was just 22 percent after 60 days among 12- to 15-year-olds who

received Pfizer's vaccine, according to data from the CDC's VISION network.

Other studies indicate higher effectiveness, but it's unclear whether the vaccines are doing an "extraordinary job." There's also no clinical evidence that the vaccines will shield against severe COVID-19 cases in young children.

Jha was speaking on CBS and ABC.

All of the experts who advise the government voted in support of the vaccines. But some said parents should know key details, including how the safety and efficacy data were based on small numbers of children.

"I think it's the right decision today to make these vaccines available for this age group, but I also think it's important that people understand it's a small number of children who have received these vaccines, and the safety is not as well established as it is in adolescents and adults," Dr. Cody Meissner, who advises the FDA on vaccines, said during one of the meetings. "So it's important to continue to follow the safety profile of these vaccines. I don't think they should be required for any specific situation."

On the other hand, others said they think parents should get their children vaccinated, regardless of the child's health.

"My personal hope [is] that every child in the U.S. seeks and

gets vaccinated in the near future," said Dr. Michael Nelson, another adviser.



Zachary Stieber covers U.S. and world news. He is based in Maryland.