

Autism and Acetaminophen: Understanding ASD in 2026

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Abstract

- Public health in the United States has become increasingly political and divided. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has been at the forefront of many debates in recent years.
- Most recently, the White House has released literature about autism being a potential side effect of acetaminophen. This groundbreaking claim has sparked heated debates. This is due to a wide range of conflicting studies, government documents, and public opinions.
- Several articles from various news sites and government agencies were reviewed to begin to understand the root of this debate, focusing on the language used, the sources referenced, and the deeper reasoning behind this specific attack on acetaminophen and the newfound focus on ASD.
- As of now, this study on why exactly ASD has been targeted is inconclusive as more research is needed on the subject.



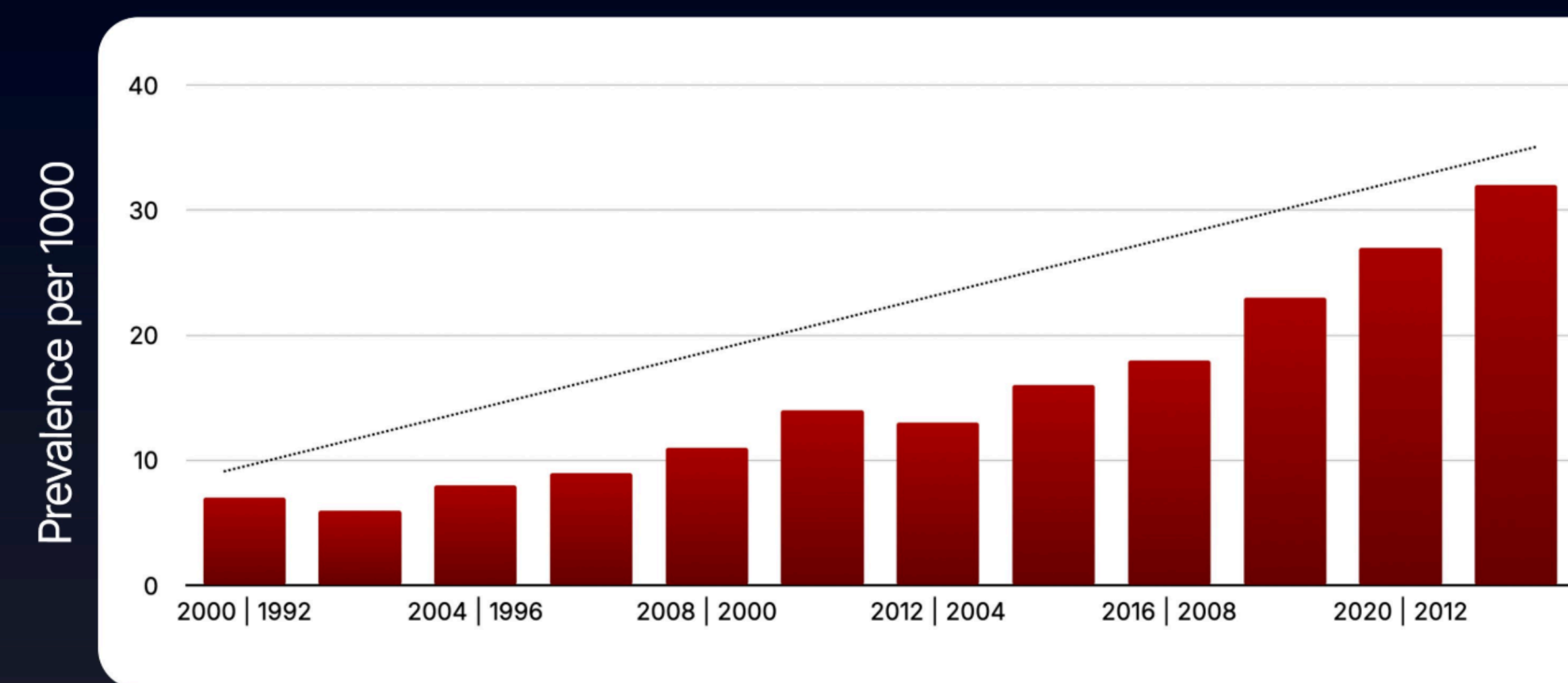
Image of acetaminophen, commonly referred to as Tylenol, posted on the Poison Control website.

Background

- In the United States, public health has become an incredibly politicized issue. Autism Spectrum Disorder, or ASD, has been one of the main topics of this debate.
- The current administration, government agencies, and other sites have recently begun claiming that acetaminophen, commonly known as Tylenol, is one of the root causes of autism.
- However, the literature on this issue is conflicting. Recent publications do not offer clear answers, some even going as far as contradicting themselves.
- To understand the decisions made to focus on ASD and acetaminophen, it is important to understand the stances of the publishers and the full context of the sources listed. This research aims to understand why acetaminophen and ASD have been targeted and to find concrete evidence to support a stance on the usage of acetaminophen.

Autism Rates Amongst Children By Age 8

Prevalence of autism increased *nearly 400%* in 22 years - from 1 in 150 to 1 in 31 (2000-2022)



Surveillance Year | Birth Year
Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Image posted by the official Twitter account for The White House (@WhiteHouse).

ARTICLES

FACT: Evidence Suggests Link Between Acetaminophen, Autism

The White House | September 22, 2025

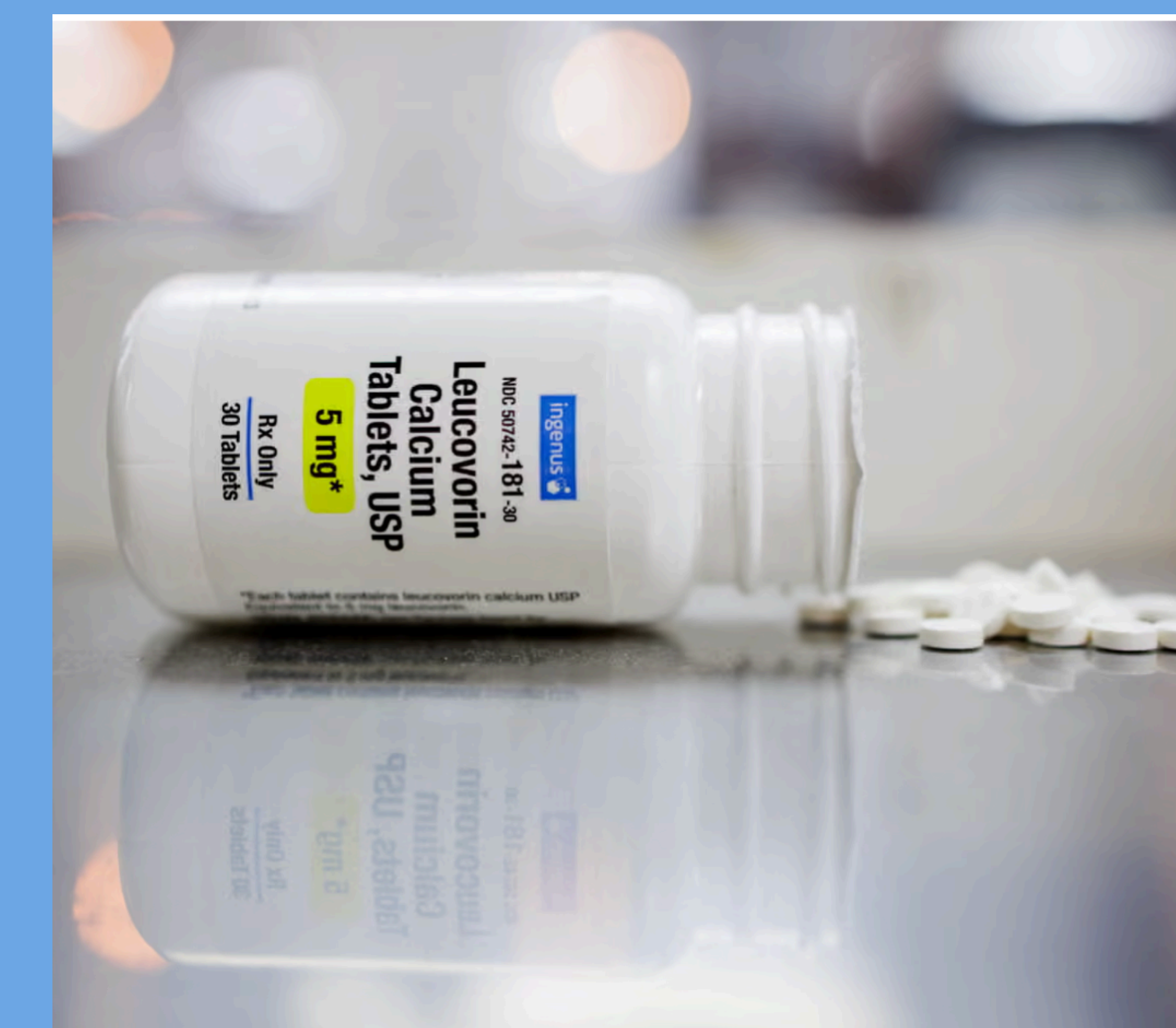
Title of an article posted on WhiteHouse.gov and the main focus of this study.

Methods

- This study focuses on White House and other public health documents regarding ASD's claimed connection to acetaminophen.
- Documents posted by the White House and agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration were analyzed in search of three main things: specific language, definitive statements about acetaminophen use, and conflicting source material.
- Each instance of "loaded language" and each definitive claim was then cross-checked with its own source material or other public documents. The cross-checks focused on finding contradictions, definitions, and study results to either disprove or back up each claim.
- By looking through these documents and their listed sources, connections to ASD, acetaminophen, and reasons for their focus can be made.

Results

- This study focuses on White House and other public health. The results for this study are currently inconclusive as more documents are analyzed.
- However, through the research that was completed, multiple instances of "loaded language," out-of-context quotes, and contradicting statements were found.
- "Loaded language" was used in some instances, invoking certain thoughts and feelings about acetaminophen usage in readers through carefully picked out words based on their connotations.
- Certain statistics were referenced that, when in the context of their sources, contradicted the claims made about them.



A photo of Leucovorin, a drug being looked at to treat autism, from The Guardian

References

