

# Could this be the cure for fake news?

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For decades, medicine has provided us with an easy way to prevent diseases: vaccines.

Most of us are familiar with how a vaccine works – it exposes our bodies to weakened versions of a virus to help us build antibodies against the real thing. Now common practice in GPs around the world, vaccination has all but extinguished some of the worst diseases of the last century, including measles and polio.

But could vaccines have applications beyond medicine?

Researchers like [Sander van der Linden](#) are working on a type of vaccination that could combat a very 21st-Century scourge: fake news.

This could work because misinformation behaves like a virus. False news stories [spread faster, deeper and farther](#) than true stories, cascading from ‘host’ to ‘host’ across Twitter hashtags, WhatsApp groups and your great-uncle Gavin’s Facebook profile (yes, he opened one). To make things worse, a fake story is tenaciously persistent.