Between March and November 2021, misinformation contributed to vaccine hesitancy for an estimated 2.35 million people in Canada. If those people who believed COVID-19 to be a hoax or exaggerated had not delayed or refused vaccination, then, by the end of November 2021, there could have been:

**COSTS OF COVID-19 MISINFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fewer COVID-19 Cases</th>
<th>Fewer Hospitalizations</th>
<th>Fewer ICU Patients</th>
<th>Fewer Deaths</th>
<th>Saved in Hospital Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>198,000</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>$299 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimates are conservative; cost-savings estimate does not account for costs associated with physician fees, outpatient treatment, or long-COVID cases, nor does it consider broader societal costs, such as lost wages. The panel's methodology is available at [cca-reports.ca](http://cca-reports.ca).
There will always be science and health misinformation. Legal and systemic responses—from regulating the information environment to expanding digital literacy to rebuilding institutional trust—carry significant ethical implications and logistical challenges. However, individuals can take steps to help disrupt the flow of misinformation.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF MISINFORMATION**
- Simple, emotional, and repetitive
- Designed to mimic credible sources
- Visual and shareable

**MISINFORMATION AND SOCIETAL DAMAGE**
Science and health misinformation can arise from and contribute to:
- Increased polarization
- Lower institutional trust
- Post-truth rhetoric

In times of crisis, our vulnerability to misinformation is heightened. So are the consequences.

**DISRUPTING THE FLOW OF MISINFORMATION**
There will always be science and health misinformation. Legal and systemic responses—from regulating the information environment to expanding digital literacy to rebuilding institutional trust—carry significant ethical implications and logistical challenges. However, individuals can take steps to help disrupt the flow of misinformation.

- Labeling inaccurate information
- Seeking out trusted messengers
- Inoculating others
- Framing corrections via the appropriate medium
- Debunking falsehoods with evidence

**Fault Lines**
The Expert Panel on the Socioeconomic Impacts of Science and Health Misinformation (2023)
[www.cca-reports.ca](http://www.cca-reports.ca)