



# The Dangerous Impacts of Conspiracy Beliefs: What Research Reveals

Research shows that conspiracy beliefs are not just odd or fringe—they have real and damaging consequences for individuals and society.

## ⚠️ Health Impacts

- ▶ Lower vaccine uptake
- ▶ Resistance to health interventions (from COVID-19 to HIV prevention)
- ▶ Reduced trust in medical authorities



## ⚠️ Democratic Risks

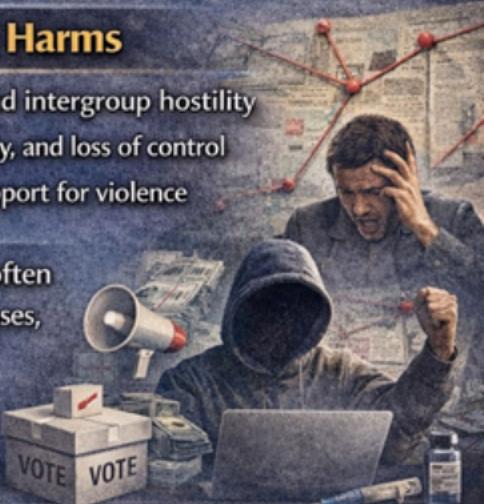
- ▶ Decreased voter participation and institutional trust
- ▶ Increased non-normative behaviors like tax refusal or political violence

## ⚠️ Social and Psychological Harms

- ▶ Increased prejudice, discrimination, and intergroup hostility
- ▶ Heightened feelings of alienation, anxiety, and loss of control
- ▶ Amplified extremist tendencies and support for violence

**What makes it worse?** These beliefs often cluster together, fueled by cognitive biases, emotional needs, and social forces.

Once embedded, they reinforce each other and resist correction.



### Sources:

- 1) Jolley, D., Marques, M. D. & Cookson, D. (2022). Shining a spotlight on the dangerous consequences of conspiracy theories. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 47, 101363. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101363>
- 2) Pilch, I., Turska-Kawa, A., Wardawy, P., Olszanecka-Marmola, A. & Smołkowska-Jędo, W. (2023). Contemporary trends in psychological research on conspiracy beliefs. A systematic review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1075779>