

Response to Health Feedback (Oct 2022)

This and other additional material related to [Fraiman et al. \(2022\)](#) are on the [Zenodo](#) repository

Preamble (written October 13, 2022)

Health Feedback [fact checked](#) our [preprint](#) on July 1, 2022 (archived version [here](#)). They did not contact us prior to publishing their fact check, and they did not update their fact check following publication of our [peer-reviewed article](#), which we made them aware of on September 7.

On October 6, they [fact checked](#) (archived version [here](#)) [an article](#) by cardiologist Aseem Malhotra. Approximately 700 words of this fact check are devoted to critiquing our article, starting with:

“One of the main pieces of evidence in the article is a study published by Fraiman *et al.* in the journal Vaccine[1].”

Noting that Health Feedback repeated many of the same allegations they made in July, we decided to contact them. We submitted the following to them via their [“Contact Us” form](#) (as no email address could be located for the editors or writers of Health Feedback).

Letter to Health Feedback (submitted October 13, 2022; screenshot follows)

We would appreciate the opportunity to engage in a discussion with Healthfeedback.org. As an international group of scientists and physicians, our goal has always been to promote evidence-based dialogue. The issues raised in the healthfeedback.org post (<https://healthfeedback.org/claimreview/article-by-cardiologist-aseem-malhotra-made-unsupported-claims-about-benefits-risks-covid-19-vaccination/>) repeat allegations made by others. Unfortunately, most of these allegations are incorrect, as described in rebuttals (such as this letter <https://zenodo.org/record/7105425/files/Response%20to%20Full%20Fact%20%2820220701%29%20with%20Sept%202022%20preamble.pdf?download=1>) and in the peer-reviewed publication in Vaccine (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.08.036>). Furthermore, readers can get access to the original data here (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6564402>) and perform replications themselves.

Health Feedback suggests that we ran arbitrary post hoc analyses, that we engaged in p-hacking, and compared “apples to oranges”. These criticisms are not original. They simply repeat claims made in response to a preprint. In the peer reviewed publication, we show that our methods were fully specified and included blinded classification of SAEs developed from a list generated by an international collaborative group with endorsement from the WHO. Contrary to the Health Feedback assertion, we did not use significance testing to create this list, and the aggregation of outcomes was clinically based--not arbitrary, all of which makes the p-hacking claim incorrect.

In short, the allegations against our analysis are serious, but they are demonstrably false. We encourage readers to get more details by going to the supplemental materials on Zenodo (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6564402>).

Different interpretations of evidence are common in science. But the Health Feedback criticism departs from scientific tradition by assuming that its interpretation of the evidence is a “fact”. We hope careful examination of the data by interested readers will stimulate productive discussions. Ultimately, we share the desire to develop the best evidence-based

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preventive and therapeutic interventions. Our most important concern is that the full body of evidence includes the analysis data files from the trials, which have still not been publicly released despite nearly two years of requests, demands, and lawsuits to obtain them. A careful examination relevant for ongoing vaccination policy will compare outcomes across trials of different vaccine platforms (as did Benn et al. – see https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4072489), including mRNA, adenovirus vector, protein subunit, and live and killed virus vaccines.

We will post this letter, as well as any response received from Health Feedback, to Zenodo (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6564402>).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Joseph Fraiman
Juan Erviti
Mark Jones
Sander Greenland
Patrick Whelan
Robert M. Kaplan
Peter Doshi

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Name: Joseph Fraiman, Juan Erviti, Mark Jones, Sander Greenland, Patrick Whelan, Robert M. Kaplan, Peter Doshi

Email: pdoshi@rx.umaryland.edu

Comment: We would appreciate the opportunity to engage in a discussion with Healthfeedback.org. As an international group of scientists and physicians, our goal has always been to promote evidence-based dialogue. The issues raised in the healthfeedback.org post (<https://healthfeedback.org/claimreview/article-by-cardiologist-aseem-malhotra-made-unsupported-claims-about-benefits-risks-covid-19-vaccination/>) repeat allegations made by others. Unfortunately, most of these allegations are incorrect, as described in rebuttals (such as this letter <https://zenodo.org/record/7105425/files/Response%20to%20Full%20Fact%20%2820220701%29%20with%20Sept%202022%20preamble.pdf?download=1>) and in the peer-reviewed publication in Vaccine (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.08.036>). Furthermore, readers can get access to the original data here (<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6564402>) and perform replications themselves.

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