

The New Zealand Herald

Polly Gillespie: Messages of support over flu death

By [Polly Gillespie](#) @pollyggillespie

5:30 PM Wednesday May 4, 2016

Kindness and gratitude are not only the greatest gifts you can give someone, but the greatest gifts you can give yourself.

I wrote from my heart, through tears and stinging memories [about my sister's tragic and unnecessary death from influenza](#), and from that article there was reaction.

Discussing vaccination and death and love all in one go is going to produce a smorgasboard (or smorg-borg as my father always referred to it) of emotion and feedback. It may be of interest to know that the feedback was so utterly and completely varied. Some made me cry. Some made me squeal with excitement. Many of the replies made my heart soar, and some, well some were just nasty moronic vitriol.

May I walk you through this?

Okay, so to re-establish my rules for retaining sanity and not cutting folk (street talk for stabbing), I never read the comments posted under the article. Fool's game. "It's a weird mob what lives down that troll hole."

1. I received many, many messages and emails from people who had contracted the flu without vaccination and almost died. The stories were harrowing. I got it. I thanked the Lord they survived.
2. I was messaged by people who were inspired to immediately get the flu shot. I felt chuffed.
3. People from the health sector thanked me for my responsible position. Cool. That felt good.
4. I had sad emails and messages from people going through the endless pain of sibling loss. Losing a sibling is excruciating. It's like your past and future are both stolen from you in a moment. I wanted to hug them and promise the pain eases. It never goes. There is sadness that sits in the back row of my heart. I will miss her forever.
5. I heard from people who knew her. Students of hers at Waikato Uni who loved her.
6. Folks overseas who have her incredible artwork hanging in their homes got in touch.
7. So too old teachers of hers that spoke of her immense talent and astonishing IQ. Room-mates, fellow dancers.
8. I heard about groups of workers in elevators collectively trudging off to the doctor together in a unified and brave slap on the face to influenza (love you guys).
9. There were kind people offering love, comfort and kindness.



10. I also heard from anti-vaxxers who referred to me as an evil mainstream media idiot spreading the filthy lies and mainstream propaganda that vaccination was safe and necessary. I wanted to smack them in the face, or at the very least send them immediately for an emergency IQ test. I'm not sure if they are aware that through a completely discredited research report done years ago by a quack who has since been struck off the register of medical practitioners, this ludicrous old wives' tale has been repeated and reported so hapless souls globally still believe it.

READ MORE: [Polly Gillespie: Losing my sister to the flu](#)

For God's sake, bloody vaccinations do not cause autism. I have interviewed brilliant autistic people who have told me the one thing they do know is that their autism was not caused by a bloody vaccination.

Not vaccinating had brought polio and rubella and TB back in to First World countries. Well thanks a whole heap! That's what we need – kids with polio and diphtheria and whooping cough. How can people sleep at night?

I got into a bit of email argy-bargy with a couple of people I referred to as cretins. (I know, I'm a bloody hothead!) Though I did warn them right? The final words in a back and forth insult flinging email trail went like this:

Dennis: "I hope you go and get another flu shot just to make sure."

Me: "And in turn I really hope you don't."

My ex-husband put it well when he said to me this morning, while I was banging my head against the wall: "Pol, it might be better for everyone if those people didn't get vaccinated."

Fine point. But to all you valiant and smart, wonderful people. Thank you for all your love and support, and most of all, thank you so much for getting immunised. I will be eternally grateful to all of you who did.

Polly Gillespie co-hosts the Polly and Grant show, weekdays, 6am-9am on The Hits.

Debate on this article is now closed.

By [Polly Gillespie](#) @pollygillespie

– [NZME](#).

Kiri T () | 10:25AM Thursday, 05 May 2016

Polly,

You thinking vaccination is great is only an opinion. People who don't think vaccinations are great, are intitled to their opinions.

I have a very high IQ AND I DON'T get the flu jab.

Why? More people get adverse reactions than die from the flu.

Kiri T () | 10:26AM Thursday, 05 May 2016

To me, it's a no brainer.

As for your comments about research, there is research (from the manufacturers) that show this. Plus it is vaccinating against last years strain, which our bodies have already built up immunity through via contact with the virus.

Kiri T () | 10:26AM Thursday, 05 May 2016

As for Polio and whooping cough resurging here's some figures:

In 1991 71% of Australia were vaccinated and there was 347 cases of whooping cough. In 2012 92% were vaccinated but there was 37,000 cases of WC.

P.s. i'm not anti-vax, just pro-education

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