



## Vaccine Controversy Swirls Around Packers QB Aaron Rodgers

Three-time National Football League MVP Aaron Rodgers tested positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday. What has followed is a case study in how the media has treated, and continues to treat, people who have made the personal decision not to take the experimental vaccines.

To put it bluntly, sports media, along with their compatriots in news media, have treated the Green Bay Packers quarterback as a pariah; someone who put his own wishes above those of that of the collective good; a selfish and arrogant person who, although a talented football player, doesn't belong in what the media considers "decent society."



AP Images

It's nothing less but a media attempt to "cancel" the man because of his personal healthcare choice. And he's already begun to lose sponsorship deals because of it. On Saturday, [Prevea Health](#), for whom Rodgers has been a spokesman for since 2012, announced it was parting ways with the superstar quarterback.

"Prevea Health remains deeply committed to protecting its patients, staff, providers and communities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic," a statement from the company read. "This includes encouraging and helping all eligible populations to become vaccinated against COVID-19 to prevent the virus from further significantly impacting lives and livelihoods."

Much of the anger and invective regarding the league's reigning MVP stems from an August press conference in which Rodgers said he was "immunized" against the COVID-19 virus. Apparently, Rodgers had used a homeopathic therapy during the off-season that he felt offered the same protection as being vaccinated.

Rodgers never claimed to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and, by most accounts, follows the NFL's protocol for unvaccinated players, except for not wearing a mask at the podium during press conferences. In August, he chose his words carefully and obviously for good reason.

Mike Florio, of NBC Sports called Rodgers a "liar" and claimed he violated trust with the "I'm immunized" statement in August.

"There have been some in the media who are friendly to Aaron Rodgers who have twisted themselves in knots today trying to say that immunization means something that doesn't make it a lie," Florio said. "It's a lie, it's a lie. And it's ok for us to call liars, liars, and to say that they're lying."

Rodgers had a chance to answer Florio and other critics on the [Pat McAfee Show](#) on Friday.

"I realize I'm in the cross hairs of the woke mob right now," Rodgers began. "So before my final nail



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gets put in my cancel culture casket, I think I'd like to set the record straight on some of the blatant lies that are out there about myself right now."

According to the MVP quarterback, he was allergic to an ingredient of the mRNA vaccines offered by Pfizer and Moderna and opted against the Johnson & Johnson shot due to reports of blood-clotting issues.

Rodgers claims he didn't lie during the August press conference and said that, at the time, the media was engaging in a "witch hunt" to out unvaccinated players.

"At the time, my plan was to say that I've been immunized. It wasn't some sort of ruse or lie, it was the truth." Rodgers said. "Had there been a follow-up to my statement that I'd been immunized, I would have responded.... I'm not ... some sort of anti-vax flat earther. I'm somebody who's a critical thinker. You guys know me, I'm somebody who marches to the beat of my own drum. I believe strongly in bodily autonomy, and the ability to make choices for your body — not to have to acquiesce to some woke culture or crazed group of individuals who say you have to do something. Health is not a one size fits all for everybody."

Rodgers appealed to the league to have his homeopathic therapy be treated the same as vaccinated status, but was rebuffed and, therefore, is treated as an unvaccinated player. The QB called the league's rules for unvaccinated players "draconian" and cited daily testing and not being allowed to travel with the team and not being allowed to leave the hotel on road trips as examples.

Rodgers admitted to consulting with another high-profile target of the vaccine shaming media, podcast host Joe Rogan, who tested positive for COVID-19 in September. News media, CNN in particular, harassed Rogan after he admitted to taking ivermectin, referring to the human form of the drug multiple times as a "horse de-wormer."

Rodgers says he is taking ivermectin, along with monoclonal antibodies and hydroxychloroquine, to treat the virus. He claims his symptoms were mild and that he already feels much better after the initial positive test.

Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers can probably expect some form of retribution from the NFL itself at some point, either in a suspension for Rodgers, fines for the team and Rodgers, or the loss of future draft picks for the team. After all, Rodgers has admitted to breaking league COVID protocols for press conferences.

But the league itself certainly bears some responsibility for the controversy. If they knew about Rodgers' vaccination status — and by treating him as an unvaccinated player they surely did — why didn't they themselves enforce the mask mandate at press conferences? The season is half over. Surely, Commissioner Roger Goodell has spotted an unmasked Rodgers at the podium at least once in the past few months.



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