

JONAS SALK

Creator of the first polio vaccine

EARLY LIFE

Jonas Salk was born in 1914 in New York. After graduating with an M.D. from NYU, he began working on the flu vaccine at UMichigan, before going to Pittsburgh to research polio.

POLIO VACCINE

Polio is a debilitating disease that, at the time, affected hundreds of thousands of children each year. Salk discovered that killed viruses of all three strains of polio could induce antibody formation without the risk of disease.

LATER LIFE AND LEGACY

The vaccine was extremely successful, reducing polio cases in the U.S. by more than 75%. Salk became director of the later-named Salk Institute, and was also rewarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his efforts.



Erica Dong

Reference:
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Encyclopedia Britannica, 24 Oct. 2023,
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