

Fauci says attacks on him are 'attacks on science'



Dr. Anthony Fauci has come under fire since the release of his emails from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo by Greg Nash-Pool/Getty Images

Dr. Anthony Fauci lashed out Wednesday at critics who have called for his firing — saying the salvos launched at him are “attacks on science.”

“It’s very dangerous,” Fauci told MSNBC. “A lot of what you’re seeing as attacks on me quite frankly are attacks on science, because all of the things that I have spoken about consistently from the very beginning, have been fundamentally based on science.”

He added, “People want to fire me or put me in jail for what I’ve done — namely, follow the science.”

The White House chief medical adviser has come under fire in recent days after the release of emails from early in the coronavirus pandemic. Critics have

lambasted him for everything from changing his stance on masks to dismissing the possibility that the virus was leaked from a lab in China.

But Fauci defended himself in the interview with Chuck Todd by slamming his detractors' criticism as "preposterous," and calling their other points "just painfully ridiculous."

"It's preposterous, Chuck. Totally preposterous," he said of the attacks.

In the early days of the pandemic, when researchers were still learning about asymptomatic transmission, Fauci said he was simply following the science that was known at the time, he said in the interview.

There was a mask shortage back then and little evidence showing that the face covers worked at stopping COVID-19 from spreading outside of hospitals, he said.

But when new research emerged, he changed his stance and advocated for wearing masks, he said.

Dr. Fauci has claimed that attacks on him are really attacks on science in general. EPA/Oliver Contreras / POOL

"As a scientist, as a health official, when those data change, when you get more information, it's essential that you change your position because you've got to be guided by the science and the current data," he said.

Fauci added that he was "picked as the villain" on the mask issue despite other public health officials sharing his views back then.

Regarding the possible lab leak in China — a theory that has grown in credibility in recent weeks as the Biden administration investigates the origin of COVID-19 — Fauci said he still thinks it's a long shot.

Source:

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