



PEDIATRIC CARE NORTH

An Affiliate of Children's Mercy

VACCINE POLICY

As medical professionals, we at Pediatric Care North feel very strongly that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for all children and young adults. We believe that in the past 100 years, along with effective hand washing and a clean water supply, vaccines are *the top reason that children have a life expectancy greater than infancy*. Unvaccinated children put other infants and immunocompromised children in our office at risk of developing these preventable illnesses as these diseases can spread through coughing, sneezing, or even by being in the same room with an infected person. We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. As pediatric health providers, it is our responsibility to promote the safest possible environment for all of our patients.

- We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.
- We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.
- **We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).**
- We firmly believe, based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.
- We firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults may be the single most important health promoting intervention we perform as health care providers, and that you can support as parents/caregivers.

The recommended vaccines and the schedule of administration are the results of years and years of scientific study and data-gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

We are more than willing to discuss any questions you may have about vaccines, but **do require all patients of our practice to receive all vaccines protecting them from HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS diseases**. This includes DTaP (whooping cough), MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), Varicella (chicken pox), PCV (pneumococcal disease), Hib (bacterial meningitis), and IPV (polio). This policy does not include the HPV, Hep B, or Hep A vaccines. However, we do strongly recommend these immunizations as well.

- Children must be up to date with their primary vaccine series by 2 years of age.
- Children must receive their boosters of MMR, Varicella, DTaP and IPV before starting kindergarten (at 4, 5, or 6 years of age).
- Children over the age of 11 will need to be up to date with their Tdap and Meningitis vaccines per AAP guidelines.

The immunization schedule that we recommend is outlined by the AAP. This standard schedule has been studied and is safe and effective in protecting your child. Spreading out the vaccine schedule has not been shown to be safer, in fact it delays the time it takes for your child to be protected from these illnesses. It is therefore against our medical advice as professionals at Pediatric Care North.

If you should decline to vaccinate your child, we will ask you to find another health care provider who shares your views.