

The physicians and nurse practitioners, and staff at Chelmsford Pediatrics have always endeavored to be good partners with our patients and families. We strive to provide information to help parents make the right decisions for each child's health. As your child's medical home, we bring our medical expertise and you bring knowledge of your child to these healthcare decisions. The establishment of trust between healthcare provider and patient is at the forefront of our work. If caregivers are not willing to accept trusted scientific sources of information, it is very difficult to maintain a positive relationship and provide quality care.

We recommend fully immunizing children according to the standard immunization [schedule](#).

Today, thanks to the development and widespread use of vaccines, the frequency of vaccine-preventable illnesses has been vastly reduced, and in some cases nearly eliminated. As a result, the occurrence of debilitating side-effects or death from illnesses such as meningitis has been greatly reduced in children over the past thirty years. Unfortunately, many parents may be confused about the value and safety of vaccines due to misinformation. If you have any questions or concerns about vaccine safety, please discuss your concerns with us.

You can also find reliable information at: [The Vaccine Education Center](#) or [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

Children who are unimmunized or under-immunized may pose a significant risk to some of the most vulnerable members of our community, including newborns, children who are immune-compromised due to cancer or other chronic illness, pregnant mothers or elderly relatives.

Therefore, we will no longer accept any new patients to our practice who choose not to vaccinate to the standards of the [Massachusetts Immunization Requirements for School Entry](#).

Some of our parents prefer to utilize alternative vaccine schedules. The AAP and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) both recommend administering multiple immunizations at each visit and not "splitting" vaccines. Multiple shots and combination vaccines are utilized for three main reasons:

1. to provide broad immunologic protection to children when they are young and most vulnerable
2. to minimize the absolute number of shots needed
3. to minimize the number of office visits, and thus the likelihood of medical error

Administration of simultaneous immunizations has been extensively studied and determined to be safe and efficacious. There is no negative effect on the normal childhood immune system. There is no medical benefit to splitting shots (and there is increased potential for harm by doing so).

We at Chelmsford Pediatrics strongly support these recommendations. Splitting vaccines leads to medical errors and increases risk to the under vaccinated child, in addition to delaying full vaccination status.

Parents who insist on diverging from the recommended vaccine schedule will be asked to sign a waiver stating that they are aware of the potential risks inherent in doing so (including, but not limited to, decreased immunity to potential life-threatening infections), as well as the lack of medical benefit from splitting shots. In addition, the parents will be asked to provide (in writing) their proposed vaccine schedule for provider approval. *Families who fail to adhere to this alternate schedule (once agreed upon) or parents unwilling to sign the waiver will be asked to leave the practice.* We hope you will join us in our mission to keep your children and your community safe and healthy.