

Lewiston Village Pediatrics Vaccine Policy Statement

- We firmly believe:
 - In the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.
 - In the safety of our vaccines.
 - All children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
 - Based on all available literature, evidence and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities. We firmly believe that thimerosal, a preservative that has been in vaccines for decades and remains in some vaccines, does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.
 - Vaccinating children and young adults may be the **single most important health-promoting intervention we perform as health care providers**, and that you can perform as parents/caregivers. The recommended vaccines and their schedule given 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.
- These things being said, we recognize that there has always been and will likely always be controversy surrounding vaccination.
- The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that we are even discussing whether or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis or even chickenpox, or known a friend or family member whose child died of one of these diseases. Such success can make us complacent about vaccinating. But such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results.
- Over the past several years, many people in Europe have chosen not to vaccinate their children with MMR vaccine after publication of an unfounded suspicion (later retracted) that the vaccines caused autism. As a result of under-immunization, there have been outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles in Europe over the past several years.'
- Furthermore, by not vaccinating your child you are taking advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children, which decreases the likelihood that your child will contract one of these diseases. We feel such an attitude to be self-centered and unacceptable.
- We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We recognize that the choice may be a very emotional one for some parents. We will do everything we can to convince you that vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do.
- **However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your health care provider in advance of your visit.** In some cases, we may alter the schedule to accommodate parental concerns or reservations. Please be advised, however, that *delaying or breaking up the vaccines to give one or two at a time over two or more visits goes against expert recommendations*, and can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Lewiston Village Pediatrics. Such additional visits will require additional co-pays on our part.
- Furthermore, please realize that you will be required to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" acknowledgement in the event of lengthy delays.
- **Finally, if you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child** despite all our efforts, we may ask you to find another provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers nor would we recommend any such physician. Please recognize that by not vaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death.

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

- **New Patient Policy**

- We **do not** accept new patient families into our practice that choose not to vaccinate under any circumstances.
 - All new patients must agree to be vaccinated to meet NYS requirements.
 - All new patients will be required to provide proof of immunizations to our office in order to make an appointment to be seen by any provider.
 - Alternate schedules, although discouraged, will be **considered** as long as coverage is not delayed. (ex. Parent wants to receive two immunizations at the 2 month visit and the other two at 3 months).
 - Medical exemptions will be the only exception to the requirement.
 - In the opinion of Lewiston Village Pediatrics, there are no legitimate religious, philosophical, or moral objections to vaccinations.
 - All new patients will be asked to sign a copy of the vaccination policy.
 - Patients may be asked to leave the practice if they are not compliant with any of our policies.
- As medical professionals, we 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. Thank you for your time in reading this policy, and please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any one of our providers.

I understand and accept the vaccination policy that Lewiston Village Pediatrics has on vaccinations.

Sincerely,

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

Print Name

Shawn P. Ferguson, MD

Donna L. Poirier, FNP

Melanie A. Leberman, PA-C

Lewiston Village Pediatrics, 733 Center Street, Lewiston, NY 14092