



Vaccine Policy

We recognize that there is much anti-vaccine talk in the press today that has heightened parents' concerns regarding immunizations. However, there is no scientific link between vaccines and autism or the other issues claimed by the anti-vaccine world. Because we believe the experts should be the one evaluating the data, and making the recommendations, we have taken a firm stand on the vaccine policies.

We require that all patients follow the standard CDC vaccine schedule unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- Severe allergy to one of the components of the vaccine (as per allergist recommendations). Minor allergies may require observation after vaccination, but the vaccine may be given.
- Vaccine is unavailable at an office visit, and will be rescheduled.
- Immune suppression in the patient or caregiver that precludes vaccination as per the specialist recommendation.
- Fever or significant illness within the previous 24 hours prior to scheduled vaccine. It is recommended to vaccinate with mild illnesses. **(Please do not give Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen to your child before their well exam).**
- Inability to vaccinate with a live virus due to another live virus vaccine being given in the previous 28 days. (MMR/Chickenpox vaccine and nasal Influenza)
- Chronic high dose steroid of at least 2 weeks duration may exclude certain vaccines.
- A child is past the age for which the vaccine is approved for use.
- Chronic illness that precludes vaccination.

The only vaccines that are excluded from this policy due to the difficulties enforcing standard scheduling, **but are still strongly recommended are:**

- Seasonal Influenza
 - HPV (Papilloma virus vaccine)
- *Meningitis B vaccine (new college recommended vaccine)

Commonly Asked Questions

- What is your policy if we missed some vaccines, but are willing to vaccinate?
- If a newborn did not get the Hepatitis B vaccine in the hospital, we will give it at the first office visit.
- If a child transfers to our office and requires "catch-up", we will follow the CDC catch up schedule guidelines.
- Why don't we allow an alternate vaccine schedule?

Safety: A number of studies have shown that the standard vaccine schedule is safe and effective. There are no studies supporting a slower schedule.

Protection: We want our patients to be protected as soon as possible against these preventable illnesses. Delaying vaccines increases the time that children are susceptible to diseases. Because of increased rates of inadequately vaccinated children, there are increasing rates of these preventable diseases. This increases the chance that susceptible children will be exposed to and catch a potentially deadly illness. Remember, vaccines teach our body to recognize certain virus and bacteria as “non-friendly” and immediately create a reaction to neutralize it, or impede its spread.

Too Many Too Soon? For those who are worried that there are too many vaccines too soon and that they will overwhelm the immune system: It has been shown that is not the case. The schedule has been shown to be safe. We are exposed to a few hundred thousand viruses and bacteria each minute through normal breathing. Children receive about 130 antigens from vaccines. This is not a significant number compared to the millions upon millions of viral and bacterial antigens that enter a child’s lungs daily. The number of antigens administered with the vaccines has dropped over the years, but the number of illnesses being prevented has increased.

Unintended consequences: Separating vaccines also requires more visits to our office, which can expose children to more illness. In the past, when we tried this approach, we would find our children being significantly more delayed than initially intended by the parents, and therefore with increased risk of exposure to diseases. Remember, your child’s health is our priority!

Stress: Studies have shown that the first injection causes a stress response (measured by crying, elevated heart rate, blood pressure, cortisol levels), but subsequent injections given at the same time do not increase as significantly the stress when compared to returning on different days to get further injections. Children with delayed schedules are actually subjected to more stress.

Perspective: We are more likely to suffer death from car accidents than to have an adverse reaction to a vaccine. Most “reactions” are the body’s natural protective (immunological) system recognizing an aggressor.

As Paul Offit (Author of Autism False Prophets) summarized in addressing parents’ concerns:

Do Multiple Vaccines Overwhelm or Weaken the Infant’s Immune System?

Current studies do not support the hypothesis that multiple vaccines overwhelm, weaken, or “use up” the immune system. On the contrary, young infants have an enormous capacity to respond to multiple vaccines, as well as to the many other challenges present in the environment. By providing protection against a number of bacterial and viral pathogens, vaccines prevent the “weakening” of the immune system and consequent secondary bacterial infections occasionally caused by natural infection.

Not Vaccinating Your Infant or Child

If you do not plan on having your infant or child vaccinated according to the vaccine schedule as recommended by the CDC, then we respectfully ask you to find a physician who is willing to take this risk with you.