

Vaccine Policy Statement

We the providers of Lancaster Pediatric Associates believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives. We believe in the safety of our vaccines and follow guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics in administering these vaccines according to schedule. We believe based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

Vaccines have been effective in preventing illnesses like polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis along with the fatal complications that come from acquiring these illnesses. Despite the successes, we still have outbreaks of whooping cough, measles and meningitis today due to world travelers bringing many diseases back to the United States and from unvaccinated patients.

Most vaccines prevent illnesses by herd immunity. This occurs when enough people in a community are immunized against a certain disease making it more difficult for that disease to be passed between those who are not immunized. Your child is benefiting from the herd immunity of other children who are vaccinated, but herd immunity does not provide protection as well as direct immunization does.

All patients in this practice are required to receive a minimum of DTaP, Hib, polio, and pneumococcal vaccines by six months of age, all AAP-recommended immunizations by two years of age, and the meningococcal vaccine and booster doses of Tdap vaccines by age 12 years old.

Please note that your unvaccinated child is not only at risk for contracting vaccine preventable illnesses but also puts the infants and immunocompromised children in our waiting rooms at risk for these diseases.

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 assure that vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do and despite what you might read, we have no financial incentives to give vaccines. **Please discuss any concerns regarding vaccines you have with your health care provider in advance of your visit.**

In certain situations, 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 Lancaster Pediatric Associates.** Such additional visits will require additional co-pays on your 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 of our efforts, we will ask you to find another health care 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 and other children at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death.**

The providers at Lancaster Pediatric Associates strive to keep your children safe. We believe that vaccinating children on schedule with current available vaccines is the right thing to do for all children and young adults.

Please discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any one of us.