

LANCASTER PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATES

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. Thiomerosol, a preservative that was used before has been removed from most vaccines and we believe is not a cause for autism or developmental disabilities.

Vaccines have been so effective in preventing illnesses like polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis and all the potentially fatal complications that could be a result of acquiring an illness. We still have outbreaks of whooping cough, measles and meningitis today.

Most vaccines prevent illnesses by herd immunity. What is herd immunity? If enough people in a community are immunized against certain diseases, then it is more difficult for that disease to get passed between those who aren't immunized. This is known as herd immunity. 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. Also, your unvaccinated child can also be a risk to infants in our waiting rooms and in your community if they have not yet started their immunizations.

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 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 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 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 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.