

VACCINE POLICY STATEMENT

We firmly believe it is our moral and ethical obligation to produce this vaccine policy statement maintaining our Hippocratic Oath promise to all our patients to offer evidence-based medicine and do no harm.

We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.

We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.

We firmly believe that **ALL** healthy children and young adults should receive **ALL** the recommended vaccines according to the schedule recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

We firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults is one of the MOST important health-promoting intervention we perform as healthcare providers, and that you can perform as parents/caregivers. The recommended vaccine schedule is the results of MANY years of extensive scientific study and data gathering on millions of children and adults by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

We KNOW, based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies, that vaccines DO NOT cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

We take pride in the fact that every child that comes to our office to receive medical care is fully vaccinated according to the CDC and AAP recommended standards. Your infant child is unlikely to be exposed to any vaccine preventable diseases in our waiting room.

We DO NOT agree to delay vaccines based on parental fear. Please be advised that delaying or “breaking up the vaccines” to give one or two at a time over two or more visits goes against expert recommendations, can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death). It also goes against our medical advice. Such additional visits would require additional co-payments or charges on your part and imparts increased number of pain experiences for your child. We do not carry individual vaccines if combination vaccines are available precisely to reduce the number of injections and pain experiences any child will receive from us.

We feel that refusing to vaccinate your children is ill-informed 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 that have been persuaded by false information from the media, entertainment industry, and internet sources. We will do everything we can to reassure you and provide you with accurate and scientifically based information that vaccinating according to the CDC schedule is the best way to make sure your child stays healthy.

Please realize that you will be required to sign a “Refusal to Vaccinate” acknowledgement if you refuse any vaccination. Because we are committed to protecting the health of your children through vaccination, **we require that ALL our patients be vaccinated.** Infants will receive all age-

appropriate recommended vaccines by 2 months of age, with additional recommended vaccines as well as booster doses by two years of age. Children will receive additional recommended booster doses by the time they are 5 years old and will be given recommended 11–12-year preteen vaccinations by the time they are 13 years old. We will complete 16-year teen vaccinations before each child’s 17th birthday. And, we will also give your child/teen an annual influenza vaccination unless they receive it at a school clinic or pharmacy. Finally, if you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, **we will ask you to find another healthcare 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, disability, and even death. As medical professionals, we feel very strongly that vaccinating your child per CDC recommendations with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do to protect all children and young adults. Thank you for taking the time to read this policy. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any one of us.

This said, we recognize that there has always been and will likely always be controversy surrounding vaccination. Indeed, Benjamin Franklin, persuaded by his brother, was opposed to smallpox vaccine until scientific data convinced him otherwise. Tragically, he had delayed inoculating his favorite son Franky. The boy contracted smallpox and died at the age of 4, leaving Franklin with a lifetime of guilt and remorse. In his autobiography, Franklin wrote: “In 1736, I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the smallpox...I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation, on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if a child died under it, my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and that, therefore, the safer should be chosen.”

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 they should be given. Because of vaccines, many of you 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 or even lazy about vaccinating. But such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results. After publication of an unfounded accusation (later retracted) that MMR vaccine caused autism in 1998, many Europeans chose not to vaccinate their children. As a result of refusing immunizations, Europe experienced large outbreaks of measles, with several deaths from disease complications. In 2012, there were more than 48,000 cases of pertussis (whooping cough) in the United States, resulting in 22 deaths. Most victims were infants younger than six months of age. Many children who contracted the illness had parents who made a conscious decision NOT to vaccinate. In 2015, there was a measles outbreak in Disneyland, California (probably started by an infected park visitor who had traveled from the Philippines). The outbreak eventually spread to 147 people and, again, many were too young to have been vaccinated. The death toll from influenza continues to be staggering, 80,000 deaths in 2018 in the US, most in unvaccinated individuals. When you don’t vaccinate, you take a significant risk with your child’s health and the health of others around them. By not vaccinating, you also take selfish advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children, thereby decreasing the likelihood that your child will contract a vaccine preventable disease.

Adapted from Immunization Action Coalition • Saint Paul, Minnesota • 651-647-9009 • www.immunize.org • www.vaccineinformation.org
www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2067.pdf • Item #P2067 (8/16)

Signature _____

Date _____