

Tots & Teens Pediatrics Vaccine Policy Statement

- ❖ 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 children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- ❖ We firmly believe, 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.
- ❖ We firmly believe that 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. **Vaccines are effective at preventing diseases.** Parents continue to have thoughts of whether or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many people 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 unconcerned about vaccinating. This 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 people chose not to vaccinate their children. As a result of underimmunization, there were large outbreaks of measles, with several deaths from complications of the disease. 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 unacceptable!

We are making you aware and emphasizing the importance of vaccinating your child. Vaccinating according to the schedule approved by the CDC and AAP is the right thing to do. **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, can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death), and goes against our medical advice as providers at Tots & Teens Pediatrics.**

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. Please recognize that by not vaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death. 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. We understand that there are medical instances where vaccinations cannot be given due to a medical condition. If you feel that your child falls in this category, please contact our office.

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 us. Please visit www.immunize.org for information concerning vaccines and unprotected people reports.