



# Raleigh Pediatric Associates

## Immunization Policy Statement

- We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and save lives.
- We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.
- We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).
- We firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults is the single most important intervention we perform as health care providers. The recommended vaccines and schedule given are the results of many years of scientific study and data-gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.
- 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 does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

These things being said, we recognize that there has always been and will likely always be controversy surrounding vaccination. 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 or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, meningitis or even chicken pox. Such success can make us complacent about vaccinating. This attitude, if widespread, can only lead to tragic results.

Over the past several years, many people in Europe and more recently in the US have chosen not to vaccinate their children with the MMR vaccine after publication of an unfounded suspicion (later retracted) that the vaccine caused autism. As a result, there have been outbreaks of measles and deaths from complications of measles over the past several years.

Furthermore, by not vaccinating your child you are taking selfish advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children, decreasing the likelihood that your child will contract one of these diseases. We feel such an attitude is unacceptable.

We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccination. We recognize the choice may be an emotional one for some parents. We will do everything we can do to convince you that vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do. However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your physician in advance of your visit. In limited cases, we may slightly alter the vaccine schedule. Please be advised that “breaking up the vaccines” to give one or two at a time goes against expert recommendations, can put your child at risk for serious illness or death and goes against our medical advice. Such additional visits will likely require another co-payment on your part. We will not administer separate vaccines that are available in a combination, such as MMR.

Finally, if you absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we will ask you to find another practice who shares your philosophy.

As physicians, we feel strongly that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for all children and young adults. Thank you for your time in reading this policy, and please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with any of us.

**Physicians of Raleigh Pediatric Associates**