

# Wakefield Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine, P.A.

## OUR VACCINE POLICY

We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives, and we firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines. All children and adolescents should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Based on all the available literature, evidence, and current studies, we believe that neither vaccines or thimerosal, a preservative that has been in vaccines for decades, and that remains in only a few vaccines today, cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

Vaccinating children and adolescents may be the single most important health-promoting intervention we perform as health providers and that you can perform as parents/caregivers. The recommended vaccines and the schedule of their administration are the results of years of scientific study and data gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

We understand that there has always been, and will likely always be, discussion surrounding vaccination. But that discussion does not change the facts, science, or evidence about vaccines.

The vaccine campaign is a victim of its own success. It's precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that we even discuss whether or not they should be given. Because of the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, or even chickenpox. And that, of course, is a wonderful thing.

When you don't vaccinate, you take a significant risk with your child's health and the health of others around them. By vaccinating, you are decreasing the likelihood that your child will contract a vaccine preventable disease. We feel that refusing to vaccinate is self-centered and unacceptable.

We write this statement not to scare or pressure you, but to make you aware of the facts, and to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We recognize that the choice may be emotional for some parents. So we will do everything we can to support you, and help you understand that vaccinating according to the schedule 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, and can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Wakefield Pediatrics.** Such additional visits will require additional co-pays on your part. Additionally, you'll be required to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" acknowledgement in the event of lengthy delays.

**Because we are committed to protecting the health of your children through vaccination, we require all of our patients to be vaccinated. If you refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts and recommendations, 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, including death.

As medical professionals, we know that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for *all* children and adolescents. We're always happy to answer any questions, or to discuss any concerns you may have about vaccines.

Sincerely,

Milton J.C. Sevilla, M.D. F.A.A.P.