



## IMMUNIZATION POLICY STATEMENT

Effective August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

We firmly believe that childhood immunizations prevent illness and save lives.

We firmly believe that childhood immunizations are safe.

We firmly believe that immunization is the single most important preventive healthcare measure available to children in the United States.

We firmly believe in the concept of "herd immunity" – recognizing that, because there exist vulnerable patient populations for whom immunizations are medically contraindicated, there is a moral and ethical obligation for the rest of us to do what we can to minimize the likelihood of infection transmission.

We firmly believe that all eligible children should be immunized according to the U.S. Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule published yearly by the CDC.

Immunizations are the biggest medical success story of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a result of routine immunization:

- American children no longer contract polio
- Smallpox no longer exists
- German measles (rubella) and its threat of birth defects have decreased dramatically
- The incidence of whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, measles and chicken pox had been declining in many locations (until alternate vaccine schedules were started)
- There has been a measurable decrease in the incidence of head, neck and cervical cancers (among HPV vaccinated individuals) and liver cancers (among Hepatitis B vaccinated individuals)

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child.

We understand, however, that the decision to immunize may be difficult for some parents. We will do everything we can to convince you that vaccinating completely and on time is the right thing to do. Should you still have reservations regarding immunization, please discuss these with your provider. In certain cases, we may agree to alter the recommended schedule to accommodate specific parental concerns.

Should you elect to follow an unconventional, alternate or incomplete vaccination schedule, we will ask you to transparently disclose your intentions to your primary provider. That way, we can update your child's record accordingly so that each of our clinicians with whom you interact may be apprised of your intentions.

Please be advised that, in most cases, this decision will result in additional medically attended vaccine visits with co-pays as required by your insurance company. Furthermore, for each encounter that results in a child who is incompletely immunized as per the U.S. Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule, you will also be required to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" acknowledgement which will be kept on file.

National statistical data suggest that only an extremely small percentage of parents refuse to immunize under any circumstances. If you are among those who know from the outset that you will not immunize your child at all, we ask that you find another healthcare provider. We firmly believe that your choice to not vaccinate your child puts not only your child at risk, but puts other infants, young children and pregnant mothers at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illnesses, disability and death.

Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any of us. We strive to keep each of our kiddos happy, healthy and free from preventable diseases.