

Jackson Pediatric Associates Vaccine Policy Statement

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

We firmly believe in the safety of the vaccines we offer.

We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive all the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control 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. In fact, we 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 are the result of years of scientific study and data-gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illnesses that giving them has become controversial. Many people today have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis or chickenpox. However, in Europe, over the last several years many people 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 of under-immunization, there have been small outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of this disease.

We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or to coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We recognize that the choice to vaccinate may be an emotional one for some parents. We will do everything we can to convince you that vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do. In some cases, we may alter the schedule to accommodate parental concerns or reservations. 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 and goes against our medical advice as providers. Also, please realize that you will be required to sign a “Refusal to Vaccine” acknowledgement indicating you understand the risks of not vaccinating your child. As medical professionals, we feel strongly that providing vaccines on schedule is absolutely the right thing to do for all children. Thank you for your time in reading this policy and, as always, please feel free to discuss any further questions or concerns about vaccinations with any of our health care providers.