

## VACCINE POLICY

Starlight Pediatrics has carefully reviewed our approach to vaccinations in our practice. There are several factors that we feel have a bearing on this vaccine policy. Our practice wants to ensure all of our patients, as well as the community at large, are as healthy as possible. One of the most important public health advancements has been the development of vaccinations, so we strongly believe that all children should be immunized. Because of vaccines, many diseases have been eliminated or have become uncommon. Scientific research has consistently and overwhelmingly shown that vaccines are not only effective but also safe. To not have a child vaccinated not only puts that child at risk, but everyone with whom he or she comes into contact. That includes family members, classmates, and other children in our waiting room.

With these issues in mind, the following reflects our vaccine policy:

Starlight Pediatrics follows the recommended schedule of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). We look forward to providing the best care possible for our patients and their families. We respect the rights of all parents/guardians to make decisions and understand that you also want what is best for your children. We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent illness and to save lives. Based on all available literature, evidence and current studies, we do not believe that vaccines cause autism or other developmental disabilities. Furthermore, the thimerosal preservative, which has been removed from almost all vaccines, has never been shown to cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

We want to assure you that vaccines are safer today than they have ever been and that it is safe to give multiple or combination vaccines at the same office visit. This is because the reactivity of the individual vaccines is a tiny fraction of what a child's immune system would be faced with if it were exposed to the actual diseases.

We firmly believe that much of the protection of vaccines comes from mass immunity. Most vaccines produce immunity in 90-95% of children. The remaining 5-10% who do not produce immunity are protected from mass immunity, meaning that a highly vaccinated population limits the spread of most infections. As more people choose not to vaccinate, mass immunity will become absent. Now more than ever, it is important to protect those who choose to vaccinate their children from those who elect not to vaccinate.

Our policy is written to emphasize the importance of vaccinating children. We recognize that the choice may be a very emotional one for some parents. We will do everything we can to provide education and information that vaccinating according to the schedule is the appropriate thing to do. Please be advised refusing vaccines can put your child at risk for serious illness or even death and goes against our medical advice as providers at Starlight Pediatrics. We follow the recommendations of the AAP and CDC.

**If despite our recommendations, you feel you cannot follow the AAP and CDC recommendations for these vaccines, we will ask you to find another health care provider who shares your views. We provide urgent care service to your child/ren for 30 days starting today. After this period is over, your child/ren will be deactivated and no further service will be provided.** We do not keep a list of such providers, nor would we recommend any such providers. Please recognize that by not vaccinating, you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, 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 adolescents. We want your trust and will work to earn it. 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. By signing below, you agree and acknowledge compliance with this policy.

Yes, I will vaccinate my children

No, I will not vaccinate my children, and will be looking for another provider within 30 days.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_