



## **Pediatric Healthcare Associates Vaccine Policy Statement**

The effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives has been proven beyond any doubt. For this reason, all children and young adults should receive the vaccines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Based on all available literature and current studies, vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities. Thimerosal, a preservative that had been in vaccines for decades but is no longer in any vaccine we administer, does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

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 schedules are the result of years of scientific study. Data has been gathered from millions of children by our brightest scientists and researchers.

The vaccine campaign is a victim of its own success. Because of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, or even chickenpox, nor have known a friend or family member whose child died of one of these diseases. We cannot allow such success to make us complacent, for this will only lead to tragic results.

Over the past decades, 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 outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles. This is a potentially devastating disease. We need you to understand that by not vaccinating your child, you also put other children at risk for the disease if they are too young to be vaccinated.

We are making you aware of these facts to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We recognize that the choice may be an emotional one for some parents. We will do everything we can to convince you that vaccinating according to the recommended schedule is the right thing to do. If you have concerns, please discuss these with us in advance of your visit. Please be advised that delaying or breaking up the vaccines to give one or two at a time goes against expert recommendations. This can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Pediatric Healthcare Associates.

If you should decide not to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we request that you find another health care provider who shares your views.

As medical professionals and your trusted partners in the care of your children, we feel strongly that vaccinating on schedule with currently available vaccines is the right thing to do for all children and young adults. Thank you for your time in reading this policy. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with any of the practitioners at PHA.

Sincerely,

Your Healthcare Team at Pediatric Healthcare Associates