

Cedar Hill Pediatrics Vaccine Policy

- **We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and save lives.**
- **We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.**
- **We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics.**
- **We firmly believe that based on all available literature, evidence and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disability.**
- **We firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults may be the single most important health-promoting intervention we perform as healthcare providers -- and that you can perform as parents/caregivers. The recommended vaccines and their schedule given are the results of years and years of scientific study and data gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.**

These things being said, we recognize that there has always been and will likely always be controversy surrounding vaccination. Indeed, Benjamin Franklin, persuaded by his brother, was opposed to smallpox vaccine until scientific data convinced him otherwise. Tragically, he had delayed inoculating his favorite son, Franky, who contracted smallpox and died at the age of four, leaving Ben with a lifetime of guilt and remorse.

The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that we are even discussing whether or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis or even chicken pox -- or even know a friend or family member whose child died of one of these diseases. Such success can make us complacent or even lazy about vaccinating. But such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results.

Over the past 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 causes autism. As a result of under-immunization, there have been increasing outbreaks of measles including recent outbreaks in Washington State and New York City and several deaths from complications of measles.

We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We recognize that the choice may be a very 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. However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your healthcare provider in advance of your visit. 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 (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Cedar Hill Pediatrics. Furthermore, please realize that you will be asked to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" at each visit if vaccines are not given according to the schedule to acknowledge that you are aware of the risks of not vaccinating on time.

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.

Name of Parent _____

Child/Children _____