

Pediatric Partners of Gwinnett Vaccination Policy

For the past many years our doctors and nurse practitioners have done their best to support families who are concerned about vaccinating their children. Our philosophy has been that it is our role to provide reasoned, scientific information that can help alleviate those concerns and ultimately encourage all parents to comply with the recommendations of the medical community.

Recent resurgence of some vaccine-preventable diseases have caused us to re-evaluate our policy regarding unvaccinated or undervaccinated children using our practice for health care. For example, whooping cough, mumps and measles are now in full resurgence. These diseases are life threatening, especially to our youngest patients. Infants and those on immunosuppressive drugs are unprotected against these diseases. Because of these reasons the American Academy of Pediatrics has also recently changed its stand on vaccine policies in pediatric offices. In the face of recent outbreaks, we no longer have the option of supporting families who choose not to vaccinate or to delay recommended vaccines. Many of our vaccine-compliant patients have voiced concern about possible exposure in our health care facilities. It is our duty to provide the safest environment possible to receive health care.

At Pediatric Partners of Gwinnett:

- We firmly acknowledge the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.
- We firmly acknowledge the safety of our vaccines.
- We firmly believe that all children should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).
- We know without a doubt, based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

All of our providers agree that vaccinating your children may be the *single most important* health-promoting and life-saving intervention that you can perform as parents. All of the children of our doctors and nurse practitioners have been fully vaccinated per the CDC/AAP schedule.

Effective July 1, 2017, our practice no longer accepts new families that do not vaccinate their children. Established patients that are behind on the CDC required vaccines will be given sufficient notice and time to bring their children up to date. Parents who have delayed their children's vaccinations by choice will be given three months from the date they are informed of this policy to begin to comply. If your child is behind we will provide easy access to getting your child up to date.

Our policy states:

1. All children must receive all vaccines recommended by the AAP that are mandated for school entry by the State of Georgia.

2. All children must begin receiving their immunizations at age 2 months and be up-to-date on all required vaccines (including MMR and Varicella) by the age of 2 years.
3. We fervently recommend utilizing the immunization schedule as determined by the AAP and CDC.
4. If a parent or caregiver elects to limit the number of immunizations per visit, it is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to comply with item 2 as listed above.
5. All parents/caregivers who do not follow the AAP vaccine schedule must sign a waiver until completion of required vaccines.

Parents or caregivers of our patients will have to sign acknowledging receipt of this policy. Families of unvaccinated or under-immunized children will then have 90 days to start vaccinating their child(ren). The catch-up schedule must be approved by the office and if the child falls behind, no further grace period will be provided.

Following the 90 day grace period, parents or caregivers who do not wish to start immunizing will have to find another Pediatric practice. We do not keep a list of such providers and will not be able to provide families with names of physicians who accept families who choose not to vaccinate their children. Please recognize that by not vaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness, disability, and even death.

We prefer to remain your child's Pediatrician and will not dismiss any family who is actively working to properly vaccinate their children. Our staff of doctors and nurses is here to help. A link to the CDC schedule can be found on our website. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

For more information please visit the following websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/>

<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/>

<http://www.immunize.org>