



VACCINE POLICY STATEMENT

We clearly know vaccines are effective to prevent serious illness and to save lives.

We clearly know vaccines are safe.

We clearly know that all children and young adults should receive all the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

We clearly know, based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities. We clearly know that thimerosal, a preservative that has been in vaccines for decades and remains in some vaccines, does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

We clearly know 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 parent/caregivers. The recommended vaccines and the vaccine schedule are the result of years and 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 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 chickenpox, or known a friend or family member whose child died of one of these diseases. Such success can make us complacent or even lazy about vaccinating.

Such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results. After publication of an unfounded accusation (later retracted) that MMR vaccine caused autism in 1998, many Europeans chose not to vaccinate their children. As a result of underimmunization, Europe experienced large outbreaks of measles, with several deaths from disease complications. In 2015, there was a measles outbreak in Disneyland, California. The outbreak eventually spread to 147 people. Many who caught the disease were too young to have been vaccinated, but exposed to people who should have been vaccinated but were not. In 2012, there were more than 48,000 cases of pertussis (whooping cough) in the United States, resulting in 22 deaths. Most victims were infants younger than six months of age. Many children who contracted the illness had parents who made a conscious decision not to vaccinate them.

When you don't vaccinate, you take a significant risk with your child's health and the health of others around them. By not vaccinating, you also take advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children.

*We are making you aware of these facts 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. Please be advised 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 here at Springville Pediatrics.***

*Because we are committed to protecting the health of your children through vaccination, **we require all of our patients to be vaccinated.** Infants must receive all age-appropriate recommended vaccines in the recommended timely manner beginning by 3 months of age and completed by 2 years of age. Children will receive additional recommended booster doses by the time they are 7 years old, and will be given required 11-12 year preteen vaccinations by the time they are 13 years old. We will complete the 16 year teen vaccinations before each child's 18th birthday. Please realize that you will also be required to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" acknowledgement in the event of lengthy delays.*

Finally, if you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we will ask you to find another healthcare provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers. Please recognize that by not vaccinating, you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death.

As medical professionals, we know that vaccinating your child on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do to protect all children and young adults. Thank you for taking the time to read this policy. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns that you may have about vaccines with any one of us.