

Carolina Pediatrics of the Triad Vaccination Policy

Carolina Pediatrics of the Triad has carefully reviewed our approach to vaccinations in our practice. We want to ensure that all of our patients, as well as our patient community, are as healthy as possible. One of the most important public health advancements has been the development of vaccinations, by which many diseases have been eliminated or become uncommon.

Scientific research has consistently and overwhelmingly shown that vaccines are effective and safe.

Based on all available 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.

Alternate or limited vaccination schedules have proven to have no benefit and can cause harm by leaving children vulnerable to vaccine-preventable disease.

Vaccines are safer today than they have ever been, and it is safe to give multiple or combination vaccines at the same office visit. All vaccines expose recipients to a smaller number of antigens (parts of viruses or bacteria that generate an immune response) than the actual virus or bacteria. Even when multiple vaccines are given together, the number of antigens is limited compared with the number of pathogens to which infants are exposed during a normal day.

Vaccinating your child keeps them, and your community, healthy. When a high percentage of people in a community are vaccinated, everyone in the community, including those who have not been vaccinated, is at lower risk of being infected with a potential pathogen. This is known as herd (or community) immunity. Herd immunity provides protection for those in the community who did not get sufficient immunity from the vaccine, and/or those who are medically unable to be vaccinated. This includes infants under 6 months of age, children undergoing immunosuppression or chemotherapy, patients with severe allergic reactions to vaccines, and the elderly.

Children who are un- or under-vaccinated (e.g. not vaccinated "on schedule") put themselves and those they are in close contact with at risk, including family members, classmates, and other patients in our waiting room. Un- or under-vaccinated children are vulnerable to contracting vaccine-preventable disease. In addition, as more people choose not to vaccinate, or vaccinate "on schedule", this reduces herd immunity and allows outbreaks to occur. Recent outbreaks of measles, pertussis, and polio in America and abroad reflect how such practices can impact your child as well as our community.

Given the above, the physicians of Carolina Pediatrics of the Triad have revised our vaccine policy:

1. CPTriad follows the recommended immunization schedule of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
2. CPTriad patients are expected to receive vaccinations mandatory for public school attendance **within two months** from when they are currently recommended. This includes HepB, Hib, IPV, Prevnar, DtaP/TdaP, MMR, Varicella, and Meningococcal vaccines.
3. Families with questions or concerns regarding the above are asked to schedule a Pre-Vaccination Conference with their primary pediatrician in advance.
4. Families who are unable or unwilling to follow the above guidelines will be asked to find another health care provider.

As pediatricians, we partner with parents to make the best decisions for their children and their health. We understand that the choice to vaccinate can be an emotional one for some families. We will do everything we can do to provide education and information that vaccinating according to the AAP/CDC schedule is the healthy thing to do for all children and adolescents. In addition, we have a responsibility to our overall community to promote and support herd immunity in our local community. We want your trust and will work to earn it.