



## **Immunization Policy**

Over the past twenty years, increasing numbers of families have questioned the necessity and timing of childhood vaccines. Parents are often making their decisions to delay or avoid immunizations based on unscientific sources of information. The resulting decreases in vaccination rates mean that more people are now susceptible to preventable (and often untreatable) diseases and they, in turn, can pass these infections to all those around them. Here in the U.S., we have had recent outbreaks of measles and bacterial meningitis in unvaccinated, or under-vaccinated individuals.

As a practice, we are happy to discuss the immunizations recommended for infants, children and adolescents. We also suggest that families look for information on credible websites such as [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia has excellent resources at [www.chop.edu](http://www.chop.edu). We also recommend reading *Autism's False Prophets: Bad Science, Risky Medicine and the Search for a Cure*, by Paul Offit, M.D.

Given our commitment to public health as well as to the health and welfare of our patients and staff, Piedmont Pediatrics has a vaccine compliance policy:

1. Infants, children and adolescents are expected to be vaccinated according to the schedule published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
2. If an infant has not received any vaccines by 6 months of age and does not have a written plan for catching up with the AAP / CDC schedule, he or she may be asked to leave the practice. We will provide a list of primary care provider options in the area.
3. If a child has not caught up with the AAP / CDC schedule by 18 months of age, he or she may be asked to leave the practice. We will provide a list of primary care provider options.
4. Our practice will not sign immunization forms that do not meet state requirements for school entry.

Obviously, these rules will not apply if true medical contraindications exist to vaccination.

We are happy to discuss this policy further should you have any questions.

Robert S. Michel, M.D.   Gretchen L. Brantley, M.D.   Mary Anne Mayo, M.D.   Jocelyn K. Schauer, M.D.

Carol A. Boersma, M.D.

Stephanie M. Grice, M.D.

Angella D. Stitely-Lamm, C.P.N.P.   Arika B. Roy Cocke, C.P.N.P.   Sarah E. Roberts, C.P.N.P.