

Vaccination; a Statement of Support

We, the physicians of Town and Village Pediatrics, unequivocally demonstrate our strongest support for the vaccination of our patients. This is one of the single most important steps you can take in giving your child the gift of good health. Limiting the risk of vaccine-preventable illness is imperative to the health and safety of your children. We are pleased that the large majority of our patients maintain an up-to-date vaccination history.

We offer our strongest recommendation to our patients to adhere to the standard immunization schedule, as developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and CDC. This schedule of vaccinations has been scientifically scrutinized more than nearly any other medical treatment, and has repeatedly been found to be safe and effective. The development of these vaccines is among the most important scientific inventions in human history, and we are fortunate to have access to this protection. This is how we will advise you at every routine well visit in our office.

Clarification of recent misinformation

It is the collective opinion of millions of scientists and physicians worldwide that vaccines are both safe and effective. Yet, recently there has been considerable public scrutiny and misinformation regarding childhood vaccines. This can be very confusing and distressing to parents. It can seem as soon as one theoretical concern about vaccines is disproven and discredited, another theory is developed. These rumors and concerns regarding vaccination have originated outside of the medical and scientific community, and have been scientifically disproven repeatedly. Yet they serve to increase apprehension among many people who do not have time or access to remain up to date on scientific advancement. It is the job of your physician to advise you on these matters.

We, the physicians of Town and Village Pediatrics, will recommend the vaccines that we know are important, safe, and effective for your child; advice that we will tailor specifically for your child and his/her medical history. We have heard nearly every rumor regarding immunization; please do not trust these stories blindly. You are always welcome to ask us about the scientific validity of such rumors.

Our approach to altered vaccine schedules and vaccination refusals

For a physician, maintaining an empathetic, compassionate and ethical approach to patients that refuse medical advice, such as recommended vaccines, is fraught with difficulty. Many medical practices refuse to take care of such patients, as they are at significantly increased risk of serious illness and death and pose a serious risk of disease to us all. **Furthermore, it is destructive to the patient-physician relationship to have such a lack of trust.**

It is our belief that all children need a place to seek medical care, even those children in families that deviate from medical and societal norms. However, we also have a moral and professional obligation to protect our patients and communities, and to take a strong stand in support of immunization. As such, we are no longer accepting any new patients whose families are not intending to complete the standard childhood vaccination series. We will continue to care for all patients currently under our care, but please be aware that we will take every measure to advise you to resume the vaccine schedule we have recommended to you. We will give you this advice every time you visit our office. *If this is not the kind of medical care you are looking for, this is not the place you should seek as the medical home for your children.*

Our personal appeal to vaccine-hesitant parents

We are pleased that the great majority of our patients maintain an up-to-date vaccination history. We have all taken care of patients **in this community** who have suffered unnecessarily from vaccine-preventable illness. To us, as your physicians, this is not an abstract debate on social media but an essential component of your child's health. The risk of vaccine-preventable infection is in our own neighborhoods.

For those current patients with a vaccine lag, it is never too late to resume your recommended vaccination schedule, and we will never stop advising you to give your children their share of one of the greatest successes of modern medicine. **Delaying vaccines, spacing vaccines unnecessarily, selectively skipping vaccines, or refusing all vaccines will serve to increase the risk to your child, and significantly increase their risk of sickness, permanent disability, and death.**

Of all the medical and child-rearing advice we may offer to you over the years, we sincerely hope we can earn your trust on this issue.