



Children & Teens MEDICAL CENTER

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Welcome to Children and Teens! We look forward to providing the best possible pediatric care for your child(ren) and to a long relationship together. One of the most important advances in modern medical care is the development of immunizations against childhood illnesses. We realize that there has been a great deal of media attention and misinformation focused on vaccines and feel that we need to address these issues.

We firmly believe in the safety and effectiveness of vaccines to prevent illness and save lives. We follow the immunization schedule developed by the Centers of Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The vaccines, and the recommended schedule, are the result of many years of scientific study involving millions of children and thousands of our best and brightest scientists and physicians.

There is **no credible evidence** that immunizations cause childhood autism or developmental delays. The issue surfaced a number of years ago with a study that purported a link between the MMR vaccine and autism. That study has since been retracted and no other studies since then have shown a linkage. Likewise, there is no evidence that thimersol, a mercury derivative which has been used in vaccines for decades but has since been removed from almost all vaccines, is associated with autism.

Controversy surrounding vaccines will likely always be with us. Benjamin Franklin, persuaded by his brother, was opposed to smallpox vaccine until scientific data persuaded him otherwise. Tragically, he did not vaccinate his son Franky, who died of smallpox at age 4. Mr. Franklin stated in his biography, *"In 1736, I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the smallpox...I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation."*

The childhood immunization program is truly a victim of its own success. Most physicians have seen complications and fatalities from these illnesses. Because of the success of vaccines, though, most of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis or even chickenpox, or known a friend or family member who died from one of these diseases.

We will gladly discuss your concerns and provide you with resources for your information (which are also listed on our website). We want you to feel comfortable with the decision you make for your child. However, if after further research and consideration, you refuse to immunize your child, we will ask you to find another

healthcare provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers, nor would we recommend any such physician.

As medical professionals, we feel very strongly that immunizing children and young adults on schedule is absolutely the right decision. It is one of the cornerstones of good pediatric care and an essential element of our practice.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any one of us.

Respectfully,

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