

Knoxville Pediatric Associates Vaccine Policy Statement

Excellence in pediatric care is a goal and a responsibility of Knoxville Pediatric Associates (KPA). Included in this responsibility is an emphasis on preventative care including the adherence to respected and tested guidelines of vaccine administration. In fact, vaccinating children and young adults may be the single most important health-promoting intervention we perform as health care providers. History has proven the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and save lives. The safety of vaccines has undergone all levels of scrutiny by the brightest of scientists and physicians and it is evident to us and the pediatric community in general that ongoing concerns of vaccine safety are not based on researched and well documented facts.

We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive all the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Center for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics. These organizations independently review and research the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, sometimes taking years to finalize approval. They also mandate strong adherence to follow-up on any reported adverse reactions.

These organizations as well as we physicians at KPA review available literature, evidence and current studies. There is no data that withstands medical scrutiny to support the association in any way of vaccines with autism or other developmental disabilities. Even previous concerns such as the amount of preservative in vaccines have been since refuted although all vaccines still contain no preservatives.

The success of vaccines has actually made it easier for people to discuss whether or not vaccines need to be given. The recent outbreaks of measles, a disease once thought eradicated from the U.S., gives us continued reason to give those vaccines against now rare diseases. The unvaccinated that get disease not only are risking their own health but that of others that are exposed to them. Even in the vaccinated there is not always 100% effectiveness of the vaccine but the overwhelming effectiveness of vaccines keeps even those at risk from being exposed if everyone gets vaccinated. Most of us, including many of the younger doctors, have never seen the complications and serious illness, including death, that accompany many vaccine preventable diseases such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, polio, pneumococcal and H. Flu Type B disease. You do not have to go back many generations to understand the tragic nature of these diseases.

If you have doubts about giving your child vaccines, your pediatrician will take the opportunity to discuss your concerns. Current recommendations advise against breaking up vaccines to give fewer over more visits, or delaying immunizations past the recommended guideline period and we support those recommendations.

After an educated discussion of any concerns that you might have, if you remain uncomfortable with giving your child vaccines on the recommended schedule, many of which are recommended prior to age two, you will be asked to find a different health care provider that better meets your needs. As a patient of this practice you should be comfortable and compliant with initiating the vaccines at two months of age and remaining on the recommended schedule.

Opinions that vary widely are readily available on the internet. We are happy to suggest reputable web sites if you wish to do your own research. Importantly, the care of your child requires a trust relationship between you and your pediatrician. We deeply respect that trust you place in us and will do everything possible to maintain that trust.