

Marion Pediatrics, Vaccine Policy

We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives. We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.

We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

We firmly believe, based on all available literature, evidence and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities. We firmly believe that thimerosal, a preservative that has been in vaccines for decades and remains in some vaccines, does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

We firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults may be the single most important health-promoting intervention we perform as health care providers, and that you can perform as parents/caregivers. The recommended vaccines and their schedule given are the results of years and years of scientific study and data gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

These things being said, we recognize that there has always been and will likely always be controversy surrounding vaccination. Over the past several years, many people in Europe have chosen not to vaccinate their children with the MMR vaccine after publication of an unfounded suspicion (later retracted) that the vaccine caused autism. As a result of under immunization, there have been small outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles in Europe over the past several years.

We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We recognize that the choice may be a very emotional one for some parents. We will do everything we can to convince you that vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do. However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your health care provider in advance of your visit. In some cases, we may alter the schedule to accommodate parental concerns or reservations. Please be advised, however, that delaying or "breaking up the vaccines" to give one or two at a time over two or more visits goes against expert recommendations, and can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Marion Pediatrics. Such additional visits will require additional co-pays on your part. Furthermore, please realize that you will be required to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" acknowledgement in the event of lengthy delays.

Finally, if you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we will ask you to find another health care provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers nor would we recommend any such physician. Please recognize that by not vaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death.

As medical professionals, we feel very strongly that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for all children and young adults. Thank you for your time in reading this policy, and please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any one of us.