



## IMMUNIZATION POLICY STATEMENT

We, as providers here at Pediatric Healthcare Unlimited, feel strongly that all children and young adults should receive ALL the recommended and required vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Vaccines have kept children healthy and have saved millions of lives for more than 50 years. Our practice would not be a good fit for your family if you choose not to immunize at all or prefer an alternative schedule.

### **Vaccines work!**

Vaccines contain the same antigens (or parts of antigens) that cause diseases. For example, measles vaccine contains the measles virus. But the antigens in vaccines are either killed or weakened to the point that they do not cause actual infection. However, they are strong enough to make the immune system produce antibodies that lead to protection and immunity. In other words, a vaccine is a safer substitute for a child's first exposure to a disease; the child gets protection without having to get sick. If a child should get the disease later after he has been vaccinated, the symptoms of the illness would be less than what they would have been if he had not been vaccinated. We are concerned that unimmunized children in our office and in our communities pose a danger and a risk to other patients, particularly children who are too young to be fully immunized and those, who due to other medical problems (ie, cancer) have faulty immune systems.

### **Vaccines are safe!**

The United States has the safest, most effective vaccine supply in its history. The vaccine safety system ensures that vaccines are as safe as possible. All vaccines are studied in clinical trials prior to being made available to the general public. These studies are carried out by vaccine manufacturers and help the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) make decisions about whether a vaccine is safe, effective and ready to be licensed for use. Post-licensure studies are conducted after a vaccine is approved by the FDA and made available to the public. These studies continue to monitor vaccine safety and often include groups that are often underrepresented in clinical trials. These studies can look for rare adverse events. These studies have shown over and over that vaccines do not cause autism or any other developmental disabilities. The timing (or schedule) of when one receives vaccines is very important; the immune system needs "re-primed" at a particular interval in order for a protective

amount of antibody to be made over time. Alternate vaccine schedules do not allow the “re-priming” to occur because the booster doses of vaccine are usually given too far apart.

**Vaccines are necessary!**

We believe that your child should receive all required and recommended childhood vaccines. In the United States, we have multiple pockets of unimmunized children, as well as many families who travel abroad to countries where vaccine – preventable illnesses are still common. By administering vaccines according to the recommend schedule, we are protecting the health of the patients we serve and those around them.