

SANDHILLS PEDIATRICS VACCINE POLICY

The physicians of Sandhills Pediatrics are dedicated to providing the best care that we can for our patients. To achieve this goal effectively, we must be able to enter into a partnership based on mutual trust with the parents of our patients. We believe that immunizations are one of the most important health interventions a parent can provide for their children, and we want all of our patients to benefit from this modern lifesaving tool. While we recognize and respect the parents' role as the ultimate decision maker for their child's healthcare, we believe strongly that we are obligated to deliver the best and safest healthcare possible for our patients and our community. In order to meet that obligation, we now require for our patients to be fully immunized against most of these vaccine preventable diseases within a reasonable amount of time. Immunizations do sometimes have side effects, but these side effects are fortunately usually mild and easily treatable. Serious side effects of vaccines are quite rare, but the diseases these vaccines protect against can, and do, cause severe illness, brain damage and death. We must also protect our patients who are either too young to receive vaccines or cannot receive vaccines for a medical reason from being exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases in our office.

As a group practice, we feel we must implement a consistent policy in regard to parental refusal of immunizations. Refusal of our required vaccines indicates a significant difference in philosophy of care, and will be considered to be a voluntary termination of the doctor patient relationship by the parent(s), and as such will necessitate a transfer of the patient to another practice.

We recognize that some parents wish to pursue an "alternative" or delayed immunization schedule. We do not recommend this approach as it needlessly delays important protection against serious disease. We strongly encourage all parents to fully immunize their child(ren) according to the recommended immunization schedule published by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP.) However, we are willing to "work with" parents who intend to meet our requirements on a case-by-case basis.

We encourage you take the time to read quality papers and internet sites about the benefits of vaccines. The best internet site for vaccine education can be found at www.vaccine.chop.edu, which is hosted by one of the most respected children's hospitals in the country, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The federal government also maintains an informative site at the CDC web site: www.cdc.gov/vaccines.

We hope that you will review accurate information about immunizations and allow your child(ren) to receive this important protection. All recommended childhood vaccines are available through our office at modest cost, or through the local county health department at no charge.

The vaccines that we require are available on request; we do require all vaccines required to attend schools and daycare in the state of South Carolina, plus at least one additional vaccine. Since our requirements match those of the state of South Carolina, we are not able to exempt any child from the required vaccines unless there is a medical reason recognized by the CDC or AAP as valid.

Parental/Guardian Statement:

I have read and fully understand the Sandhills Pediatrics Vaccine Policy. I understand that failing to immunize my child(ren) according to this policy is a voluntary termination of the doctor patient relationship on my part and will result in my child(ren) having to transfer to a different practice.

Patients Name _____ Date of Birth: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____