

### Mill Brook Pediatrics Vaccine Policy Statement

Mill Brook Pediatrics is dedicated to providing comprehensive, compassionate, and quality care to our patients and families in the communities we serve. We are committed to practice medicine in compliance with the evidence based guidelines established by groups of experts, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. To that end, we feel that the best way to protect the health of all our patients is to require that they are all fully immunized according to the schedules published by the above organizations.

We at Mill Brook Pediatrics firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults may be the single most important health intervention we perform as healthcare providers, and that parents perform for their children. The recommended vaccines and the schedule for administering them are the result of decades of scientific study and data gathered on millions of children by thousands of our most accomplished physicians and scientists. To put it simply, vaccines save lives. A recent study by the CDC reported that childhood immunizations administered over the past two decades will prevent 322 million illnesses, 21 million hospitalizations, and 732,000 deaths.

We at Mill Brook Pediatrics firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines. We firmly believe, based on the wealth of available literature, evidence, and medical studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities. Vaccines are safer today than they have ever been and there are no detrimental effects of giving multiple vaccines or combination vaccines at the same visit. Vaccines do not weaken a child's immune system, they strengthen it and allow it to combat viruses and bacteria it is exposed to at a later time.

The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that this policy is necessary. Because of vaccines, most people have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis or chicken pox, or known a friend or family member whose child has died or become permanently disabled from one of these diseases. Such success has made some of us complacent with oftentimes tragic results. Over the past few decades we have seen multiple outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, H. Influenza, and pertussis, with multiple deaths from these diseases and their complications. Many of those who contract disease during these outbreaks are unvaccinated, some by choice, but more importantly some are infants too young to receive vaccines.

As your trusted health care providers, we feel that we have an important responsibility to protect our patients, their families and their communities from vaccine-preventable diseases, especially the most vulnerable among us, namely infants too young to receive vaccines. We can no longer accept the risk that unimmunized or under-immunized children or adolescents pose to other children and their families in our practice and our communities. We will not tolerate the chance that an infant may be exposed to a vaccine-preventable disease in our waiting room by an unvaccinated patient. Our actions are

consistent with what many other pediatric practices across the country are doing to prevent the spread of deadly preventable diseases.

We at Mill Brook Pediatrics therefore ask that each of our patients be up to date at each visit with the recommended vaccines for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, H. influenza, S. pneumonia, rotavirus, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, polio, and meningococcus, unless medical contraindications exist. Although we also recommend that patients be vaccinated against hepatitis B, hepatitis A, and HPV; and that they receive yearly influenza vaccines, these vaccines will not be considered mandatory. If a patient is not currently up to date, then a catch-up vaccination schedule will be developed by the physician and parents of the patient. If a family decides not to follow the catch-up vaccine schedule, then the names of other pediatric providers in the area will be given to the family so they may find alternative care.

We hope that you see that this decision is in the best interest of your children and the other children in our practice. Please contact our office if you have any questions about this policy. Further information regarding immunizations can be obtained from the American Academy of Pediatrics ([aap.org](http://aap.org)), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)) and the Vaccine Education Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia ([vec.chop.edu](http://vec.chop.edu)).