



Sharon D'Souza, M.D.  
Alison Heffernan, M.D.  
Sarah Revis, M.D.  
Matthew Smiley, D.O.  
Julie Wigton, M.D.

9157 Montgomery Rd., Ste.100 • Cincinnati, Ohio • 45242-3260 Phone: (513) 984-5552 Fax: (513) 984-5554

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## VACCINE POLICY

We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illnesses and to save lives. Most childhood vaccines are 90-99% effective in disease prevention and have saved millions of lives for more than 50 years.

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 the schedule by which they are given are the result of years of scientific study and data gathered on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians. We also believe in the value of sharing information and in agreeing to this policy, you agree that your information will be shared with the Ohio Department of Health Statewide Immunization Information System.

The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that some parents are even discussing whether or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, or even chickenpox, or known a friend or family member whose child died of one of these diseases. Such success can make us complacent or even lazy about vaccinating. But such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results. The physicians of Montgomery Pediatrics have personally seen whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, and pneumonia, complications of chicken pox, mumps, polio, and measles. We never want to see these again.

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 outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles in Europe over the past several years. A similar trend is being seen now in the U.S. as well.

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 reassure you that vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do. However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your primary care physician.

If you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite our efforts, we will ask you to find another healthcare 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 us.

Sincerely,

The Physicians of Montgomery Pediatrics

*Effective: January 2022*