

Coastal Health & Wellness Vaccine Guideline Statement

Purpose

Our organization's strong statement of support for the vital role vaccination plays in safeguarding the health of children. Our organization clearly expressed commitment to immunization can be powerfully persuasive with parents who are hesitant to have their child vaccinated because of scientifically invalid information they have encountered on the internet or through the news media.

Definitions

- **Vaccination/Immunization:** The process of administering a vaccine to stimulate the immune system to protect against specific infectious diseases.
- **Vaccine:** A biological preparation that provides active acquired immunity to a particular disease by safely exposing the immune system to a weakened, inactive, or partial form of a pathogen.
- **Recommended Vaccine Schedule:** The timing and spacing of vaccines as developed and regularly updated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) based on extensive scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** A federal public health agency responsible for protecting public health through disease prevention, research, and evidence-based guidelines, including vaccine recommendations.
- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):** A professional organization of pediatricians dedicated to the health and well-being of children, which develops clinical guidelines including immunization recommendations.
- **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):** A neurodevelopmental condition characterized by differences in social communication and behavior, with no credible scientific evidence linking its cause to vaccines.
- **Adverse Event:** Any health problem occurring after vaccination; most are mild and temporary, and serious adverse events are rare and carefully monitored through national safety systems.
- **Vaccine Hesitancy:** Delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability, often influenced by misinformation, fear, or lack of trust rather than scientific evidence.
- **Refusal to Vaccinate:** A documented decision by a parent or guardian to decline recommended vaccines after counseling on risks and benefits.

Statement

- 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 adults should receive all the recommended vaccines according to the age-appropriate schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics as applicable.
- 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 adults may be the single most important health-promoting intervention we perform as healthcare providers and that you can do for yourself and your family. The recommended vaccines and the vaccine schedule are the results of many years of scientific study including data gathering from millions of children and adults 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.
- Indeed, Benjamin Franklin, persuaded by his brother, was opposed to smallpox vaccine until scientific data convinced him otherwise. Tragically, he had delayed inoculating his favorite son Franky, who contracted smallpox and died at the age of four, leaving Ben with a lifetime of guilt and remorse.

- Quoting Mr. Franklin’s autobiography: “in 1736, I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the smallpox...I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation, on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if a child died under it, my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and that, therefore, the safer should be chosen.”
- The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that we 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 chicken pox, 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.
- After publication of an unfounded accusation (later retracted) that MMR vaccine caused autism in 1998, many people in Europe chose not to vaccinate their children. As a result of under immunization, there were large outbreaks of measles, with several deaths from complications of the disease. In 2010 there were more than 2,000 cases of whooping coughs in California, with nine deaths in children less than six months of age. Again, many of those who contracted the illness had made a conscious decision not to vaccinate. Furthermore, by not vaccinating your child you are taking selfish advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children, which decreases the likelihood that your child will contract one of these diseases. We feel such an attitude to be self-centered and unacceptable.
- 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 very emotional for some of you. We will make strong recommendations regarding required vaccines in accordance with CDC recommendations and immunizations schedules. However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your healthcare provider in advance of your visit.
- 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 you/your family at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Coastal Health & Wellness. Such additional visits will require additional co-pays on your part. Please realize that you will also be required to sign a “Refusal to Vaccinate” acknowledgement in the event of lengthy delays.
- As medical professionals, we feel very strongly that vaccinating your child and yourself on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do to protect all children and adults. Thank you for taking the time to read this policy. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about vaccines with any one of us.

This is strongly recommended by TVFC program

Adopted by Immunize.org <https://www.immunize.org/wp-content/uploads/catg.d/p2067.pdf>