



BEAVER BROOK PEDIATRICS VACCINE POLICY

Dear Parents,

At Beaver Brook Pediatrics we care about the health and development of all our patients. Many families have concerns regarding vaccines and their reputed side effects and consequences. They may also worry about the cumulative effect of all the vaccines on the immune system and the number of antigens given in the vaccines at each visit.

Vaccines were initially developed in the 1900s to address many widespread and fatal diseases. They have become one of the most successful and safest components of our public health system. All available scientific evidence points to the effectiveness of these vaccines and their safety when given to your child. Children are exposed to thousands of germs every day of their lives; in fact they are exposed to more germs or antigens when passing through the birth canal than in all the vaccines combined. Our doctors fully support and encourage all families to vaccinate their children as recommended.

If you have concerns or fears about vaccines, please talk to your child's doctor. We can provide accurate information and resources to help you make sense of all the contradictory information that has spread over the years. Much of it has been disproven, yet still remains on web sites or even appears as topics on popular TV talk shows. Your doctor will help you separate fact from fiction.

We also must consider the health and well being of all patients in our practice and how individual choices may impact others. Given the recent outbreak of measles in our country, we feel this is a good time to clarify and inform all families of our immunization practices. Attached you will find the immunization schedule that is followed in our office. All vaccines are given as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Many of these are also required by the State of Massachusetts for admittance to school. We will work with families as much as possible to find a schedule that is comfortable for you. This schedule must be within parameters that we feel are safe for your child and minimize risk to all other patients who come into our office for care. These guidelines are explained in more detail below.

1. DTaP, Hib, Prevnar

A number of vaccines are given in infancy. This is because many of these diseases are particularly dangerous or even fatal to infants. These are Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTaP), Haemophilus Influenza Type B (Hib), and Pneumococcus (Prevnar 13). These vaccines must be given at the ages noted on the attached schedule. If parents want to separate some of the vaccines so not all are administered at once, we will make additional visits for shots as much as we are able given availability of different vaccine components. DTaP and Hib are

usually combined with Polio vaccine in a combination single shot (Pentacel). These are all required for entrance into school.

2. MMRV

Many vaccines are for diseases like Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (chicken pox) that pose a significant public health threat as well as serious illness for the individual. Prior to 2000 when measles was eradicated in the United States, 3-4 million children were infected annually, of which 50,000 were hospitalized and 500 died. In addition to the significant risk this poses to each child, the diseases covered by the MMRV vaccine are extremely contagious and can be transmitted to a susceptible person with minimal exposure (for example, sitting in or even just walking through a waiting room). Infants who are too young to receive the vaccines, or children with underlying conditions that prevent them from getting vaccines, are at greatest risk. For this reason, we require that the MMRV vaccine be given between 12 and 18 months of age and then again before entering kindergarten. These are also required for school entrance.

3. Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A and Rotavirus

Hepatitis B vaccine (HBV) is routinely started at birth, Rotavirus vaccine (Rotateq) at 2 months and Hepatitis A (HAV) at 1 year. These are all strongly recommended but parents with concerns about these vaccines should discuss them with their provider. Keep in mind HBV is required for entrance to school.

4. Tdap

This is a booster for tetanus and pertussis and is required for entrance into 7th grade.

5. Menactra (MCV4) and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

These are given in adolescence and are *strongly recommended*. Parents with concerns about these vaccines should discuss them with their provider.

Please talk candidly with your child's doctor. An open and trusting relationship between doctors and parents is crucial. We hope to participate in that relationship throughout your families' childhood and adolescence; however, families that do not think they can follow these guidelines will be asked to consider a different practice that may be a better fit for them.

Sincerely,

The Beaver Brook Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine Team