

**Carrow Street Pediatrics
Vaccine Policy 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 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 their schedule given are the results of years and years of scientific study and data gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

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 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.

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 underimmunization, there have been small outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles in Europe over the past several years.

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 convince you that

vaccinating according to the schedule is the right thing to do. However, should you have doubts, please discuss these with your health care 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 your child at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Carrow Street Pediatrics. Such additional visits will require additional co-pays on your part. Furthermore, please realize that you will be required to sign a “Refusal to Vaccinate” acknowledgement.

In addition, we want you to recognize that when we receive urgent phone calls after hours, we do not have complete access to your child’s medical chart. Consequently, we assume that all of our patients have been fully immunized, so it is up to the parent to notify any health care provider of their child’s underimmunized status. We would give very different advice on a routine call for a fever or cough in a child that is unimmunized or underimmunized. Please be advised that this may also result in an emergency room visit to evaluate for serious and deadly diseases such as meningitis and sepsis which can require a blood draw and/or lumbar puncture.

Please recognize that by not vaccinating or undervaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness, disability, and even death.

Finally, if you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we could ask you to find another health care provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers, nor would we recommend any such physician.

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.

Sincerely,

Carrow Street Pediatrics

Patient Name _____ **DOB** _____

Signature of Parent _____

Parent’s Printed Name _____

Date Signed _____