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## Vaccine Concerns

### Answers to our most common parent FAQ's

#### **Why are you confident that vaccines are safe?**

Our pediatricians (MDs) and pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) have received extensive education and training in immunology and infectious diseases. Pediatricians complete four years of medical school followed by three years of specialized pediatric residency training. PNP's are registered nurses with advanced degrees (typically a Master's or Doctorate in Nursing) and national certification in pediatric care. Both are trained to understand how vaccines work, how they're developed, and how to identify credible scientific evidence.

We rely on trusted guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), whose recommendations are based on years of rigorous research by leading scientists and physicians. One of the resources we turn to regularly is the Vaccine Education Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). Their team of vaccine experts has created helpful, science-based videos and articles specifically to answer common parent questions. If you're wondering about vaccine safety, we highly recommend these short videos from CHOP. These are great resources if you're looking for straightforward, science-backed answers.

- ["Are Vaccines Safe?"](#)
- ["How Are Vaccines Tested Before They Can Be Given to Kids?"](#)
- ["How Do You Know Whether a Vaccine Has Been Tested Long Enough?"](#)

On a more personal note, many of our physicians and PNP's have children of their own and all have given their children all of the routinely recommended vaccines.

#### **What sources do you use to stay informed about vaccines, and how do you make sure you're up to date with the latest recommendations?**

At PAA, every provider is committed to staying current with the latest medical research and recommendations—especially when it comes to immunology and vaccines. All of our providers are certified by national boards in pediatric care and are required to complete continuing education each year. This ensures we stay updated on the most current and reliable information. One of the key tools we use is UpToDate, a trusted online medical resource that functions like a constantly updated encyclopedia written by expert physicians. We turn to it frequently to confirm that our care aligns with the latest science. In addition, PAA fosters a strong culture of collaboration. When one of our providers attends a medical conference or learns something valuable from a trusted source, that knowledge is shared across our entire team, ensuring your child benefits from the collective expertise of everyone here.

## **Why do you not recommend spacing out vaccines/doing an alternative schedule?**

Our vaccine recommendations are grounded in decades of scientific research conducted by leading physicians, scientists, and public health experts. We closely follow the guidance of trusted organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), whose recommendations are based on extensive evidence about what's safest and most effective for children. At the same time, we fully respect that caregivers have the right to make informed medical decisions for their children. That's why we welcome open, respectful conversations—without judgment. We're here to listen to your concerns and clearly explain the science behind the recommended vaccine schedule, which has been proven to protect children safely and effectively. The Vaccine Education Center at CHOP has a helpful video on this topic: ["What Is the Harm in Delaying or Spacing out Vaccines?"](#) It offers a thoughtful explanation of why timing matters when it comes to your child's protection.

If a parent chooses to space out vaccines rather than follow the standard recommended schedule, we do our best to honor that preference by developing a personalized plan that ensures timely completion of all vaccines while minimizing any potential risks associated with delayed immunization. Because alternate vaccine schedules require additional nurse visits, there will be a \$35 alternate vaccine administration fee at each nurse visit, to help cover the added time and resources.

## **What about the safety of vaccine ingredients?**

Vaccine ingredients each serve a purpose. Some create the immune response, while others help the vaccine work better, last longer, or stay safe during storage and use. To read more about each vaccine ingredient specifically, CHOP has a [detailed list of vaccine ingredients](#) as well as a link to evaluate [vaccine contents per vaccine](#). Additionally, in this 2 minute video on [vaccine ingredients from The Institute of Vaccine Safety](#) you can gain a quick and thorough overview of purpose of key vaccine ingredients.

## **Is the Rise in Autism and Chronic Illness Linked to Vaccines?**

This is an important and understandable question. While science is still working to uncover all the reasons behind the rise in conditions like autism and chronic inflammatory illnesses, decades of research give us strong confidence that vaccines are not the cause. We stay up to date on the latest medical studies, especially those exploring vaccine safety, and we take this topic seriously. Large, well-designed studies from around the world have repeatedly shown no link between vaccines and autism, autoimmune disease, or other chronic conditions. If you're interested in learning more, we recommend these evidence-based resources from the Vaccine Education Center at CHOP:

- [Studies on Vaccines and Autism](#)
- ["Do Vaccines Cause Autoimmune or Chronic Disorders?"](#)
- ["Do Vaccines Cause Autism?"](#)

We're always happy to talk more about this and share what the latest research says.

## **Why Does Your Practice Require Vaccination When Others Don't?**

This is a thoughtful and important question—and one we've considered carefully as a team. Our vaccination policy is based on deep trust in the scientific process and the researchers behind the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) vaccine schedule. We believe this schedule is the safest and most effective way to protect children—and our entire community—from serious, preventable diseases.

We also feel a strong responsibility to protect those who are most vulnerable, such as infants who are too young to be fully vaccinated or individuals with weakened immune systems, like those undergoing cancer treatment. Creating a safe environment for all families who walk through our doors is a priority we take seriously.

We understand that this policy may not align with every family's beliefs, and we respect that. While it saddens us when families choose to leave because of this, we also believe it's important not to compromise the standard of care we feel is best. Our goal is never to pressure or judge, but to offer honest, respectful conversations and to care deeply for families who value our guidance—including in matters of vaccination.

## **Isn't natural immunity better than immunity from a vaccine?**

In the case of vaccine-preventable diseases—especially those that can lead to serious or even life-threatening complications—the answer is no. While natural infection may lead to immunity, it comes with far greater risks. Vaccines offer the same protection without putting your child through the dangers of the illness itself. The Vaccine Education Center explains this well in the video ["Is Natural Infection Better Than Vaccination?"](#) using measles as an example.

## **Will the vaccine make my child sick or cause the disease it's trying to prevent?**

For the routine childhood vaccines we use today, the answer is no. These vaccines are designed to safely build your child's immunity without causing the actual disease. In the past, there was one exception—the oral polio vaccine—which carried a very small risk (about 1 in 2.4 million doses) of causing polio. That vaccine is no longer used in the U.S., and none of the current routine childhood vaccines carry that risk. CHOP explains this topic clearly in two short videos: ["Can a Vaccine Give Me the Disease It's Supposed to Protect Me Against?"](#) and ["Can a Flu Vaccine Give Me the Flu?"](#).

## **I still have other questions and feel uncertain**

We're always happy to talk more about vaccination and share what the latest research says without pressure or judgment. Feel free to schedule an in-office or telemedicine visit to address your concerns. Additionally, if you'd like another trusted internet resource that tailors advice based on the patient's age and your concern (vaccine ingredients, risk for chronic illness, side effect risk, too many vaccines at once, child with fear of needles), the [Institute for Vaccine Safety "Let's Talk Shots" page](#) is a great place to start.

## Vaccine QR Code Resource List

 <p>Video: <a href="#">"Are Vaccines Safe?"</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"How Are Vaccines Tested Before They Can Be Given to Kids?"</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"How Do You Know Whether a Vaccine Has Been Tested Long Enough?"</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"What Is the Harm in Delaying or Spacing out Vaccines?"</a></p>
 <p>Website: <a href="#">detailed list of vaccine ingredients.</a></p>	 <p>Website: <a href="#">vaccine contents per vaccine</a></p>	 <p>Website: <a href="#">Studies on Vaccines and Autism</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"Do Vaccines Cause Autoimmune or Chronic Disorders?"</a></p>
 <p>Video: <a href="#">"Do Vaccines Cause Autism?"</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"Is Natural Infection Better Than Vaccination?"</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"Can a Vaccine Give Me the Disease It's Supposed to Protect Me Against?"</a></p>	 <p>Video: <a href="#">"Can a Flu Vaccine Give Me the Flu?"</a></p>
 <p>Video: <a href="#">vaccine ingredients from The Institute of Vaccine Safety</a></p>	 <p>Website: <a href="#">Institute for Vaccine Safety "Let's Talk Shots" page</a></p>		