



# Vigour Pediatrics Vaccine Policy

The physicians at Vigour Pediatrics recognize that there is much anti-vaccine rhetoric in the press today which has heightened parents' concerns regarding immunizations. However, there is no scientific link between vaccines and autism or the other issues claimed in anti-vaccine literature. <http://autismsciencefoundation.org/what-is-autism/autism-and-vaccines/> Thus, we feel it necessary to take a firm stance on the vaccine policies in our practice. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a standard vaccine schedule for all U.S. children for daycare and school entry.

**Effective August 1, 2017, all patients must adhere to the Vigour Pediatrics Vaccine Policy as detailed below.**

Vigour Pediatrics requires all patients to follow the standard CDC vaccine schedule unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- I. Severe allergy to one of the components of the vaccine.  
(Minor allergies may require observation after vaccination, but the vaccine may be given.)
- II. Immune suppression in the patient or caregiver that precludes vaccination.  
(Most often it is better to vaccinate all people around an immunocompromised person to help protect them against the vaccine preventable diseases. This includes live virus vaccines.)
- III. Fever or significant illness within the previous 24 hours prior to scheduled vaccine.  
(It is recommended to vaccinate with mild illnesses.)
- IV. Inability to vaccinate with a live virus due to another live virus vaccine being given in the previous 28 days.
- V. Chronic high dose steroid of at least 2 weeks duration might exclude certain vaccines.
- VI. A child is past the age for which the vaccine is approved for use.
- VII. Chronic illness that precludes vaccination.

## **Excluded Vaccines**

The only vaccines that are excluded from this policy due to the difficulties enforcing standard scheduling, but are still strongly recommended, are:

- Hepatitis A
- Seasonal Influenza
- HPV

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What if we've missed doses of vaccines, but are willing to vaccinate?**

If a newborn did not get the Hepatitis B vaccine in the hospital, we will give it at the first office visit and continue on schedule.

If a child transfers into our office and requires a catch-up schedule, we will catch up according to the CDC catch-up schedule.

### **What if we already started the alternate vaccine schedule?**

For those who have already started on the alternate vaccine schedule, we will begin to vaccinate according to the CDC catch-up schedule. Any future children in your family will need to follow our new policy.

### **What are the legal requirements?**

If you want to know what is required by the State of Louisiana for daycare and school requirements, please see the Louisiana Department of Health website at <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/>.

### **Why will Vigour Pediatrics no longer allow an alternate vaccine schedule?**

- I. **Safety:** A number of studies have shown that the standard vaccine schedule is safe and effective. There are no studies supporting a slower schedule.
- II. **Protection:** We want our patients to be protected as soon as possible against these preventable illnesses. Delaying vaccines increases the time that children are susceptible to diseases. Because of increased rates of inadequately vaccinated children, there are increasing rates of these preventable diseases. This increases the chance that susceptible children will be exposed to and catch a potentially deadly illness.

- III. **Too Many Too Soon?** For those who are worried that there are too many vaccines too soon and they will overwhelm the immune system: This fear is unfounded. The schedule has been shown to be safe. We are exposed to a few hundred thousand viruses and bacteria each minute through normal breathing. Children receive about 130 antigens from vaccines. This is not a significant number compared to the millions upon millions of viral and bacterial antigens that enter a child's lungs daily. The number of antigens has dropped over the same years that the number of illnesses being prevented has increased.
- IV. **Law of unintended consequences:** Separating vaccines also requires more visits to our office, which can expose children to more illness and unnecessarily increases the cost of healthcare.
- V. **Stress:** Studies have shown that the first injection causes a stress response (measured by elevated heart rate, blood pressure, cortisol levels, cry), but subsequent injections given at the same time do not increase as significantly the stress when compared to returning on different days to get further injections. So children with delayed schedules are actually subjected to more stress.
- VI. **Perspective:** We are more likely to suffer death from car accidents than to have an adverse reaction to a vaccine.

As Paul Offit (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/109/1/124.full>) summarized in "Addressing Parents' Concerns: Do Multiple Vaccines Overwhelm or Weaken the Infant's Immune System?":

Current studies do not support the hypothesis that multiple vaccines overwhelm, weaken, or "use up" the immune system. On the contrary, young infants have an enormous capacity to respond to multiple vaccines, as well as to the many other challenges present in the environment. By providing protection against a number of bacterial and viral pathogens, vaccines prevent the "weakening" of the immune system and consequent secondary bacterial infections occasionally caused by natural infection.

### **Not Vaccinating Your Infant or Child**

If you do not plan on having your infant(s) or child(ren) vaccinated according to Vigour Pediatrics Vaccine Policy, then we respectfully ask you to find a physician who is willing to take this risk with you. You will have thirty days from the refusal date to find another physician. Until that date, we will provide care for any medical needs that arise.

## **Final Thoughts**

We are united with you in desiring to take the best care of your family. We look forward to continuing to offer the highest level of care at Vigour Pediatrics.

## **Parental Consent**

In signing this form, I certify that I have received and read the Vigour Pediatrics Vaccine Policy. I agree to adhere to the recommended standard vaccine schedule put forth by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and supported by Vigour Pediatrics.

Name of Patient: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_