

Why Immunize?

Vaccinations have been a cornerstone of pediatric care since the 1950's and are responsible for the near eradication of many deadly childhood illnesses in the United States as well as the complete eradication of Smallpox worldwide. Previously common diseases such as Polio, Measles, Mumps, Diphtheria, and Whooping cough no longer infect millions of children or contribute to thousands of deaths every year in the United States.

Vaccination initiatives have been so successful that we no longer see the devastating impact of these diseases. Many of us have never experienced the fear that our child would become paralyzed from Polio within days of developing a summertime cold or lived through weeks of quarantine at home while anxiously waiting for disease to pass through our communities. With the constant, looming presence of disease, our grandparents stood in long lines waiting for the opportunity to immunize their children. In an era when most doctors and health care providers have never seen a case of Measles or Polio, we have forgotten the great benefit and tremendous success of immunizations in this country. Most of us only know the vaccines but not the diseases they prevent. Risk of illness, disability and death are viewed as improbable or nonexistent. Without first hand experience of these diseases, we tend to question the need for vaccination and raise concerns about the safety of vaccines. Celebrity endorsement and media misinformation have placed doubt in the minds of parents regarding the safety of vaccines despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Many families opt to "do nothing" in such a confusing environment.

Worldwide these diseases continue to routinely harm and kill many thousands of children and the rising rates of un-immunized children and international travel have contributed to a recent resurgence of vaccine preventable disease. Most vaccine preventable infectious disease is imported into the United States either directly or through contact with travelers and most of those infected are either un-immunized or under-immunized.

In the past, populations have relied on "herd immunity" to protect those citizens who were unable to be immunized, but as more parents choose to avoid immunization, that protection is gradually eroded and lost. In the last few years, this incomplete protection has resulted in several outbreaks of Measles, Mumps, and Whooping Cough. Vaccinations are the foundation of preventative child health care and essential to the practice of pediatric medicine. The physicians at Danville Pediatrics and Primary Care follow immunization schedules set forth by the American College of Immunization Practices and adopted by the American Academy of Pediatrics and consider agreement on immunizations vital to a functional patient-provider relationship. We encourage parents to review the Vaccine Information Sheets provided by the Centers for Disease Control for additional information about vaccines, their prevalence and clinical symptoms to help you be more informed about immunizations. We are happy to schedule an appointment to discuss immunizations and any questions or concerns you may have.



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