

Carithers Pediatric Group – Immunization Policy

Vaccines protect children, families, and the community from serious and potentially life-threatening illnesses. At Carithers Pediatric Group, we have a responsibility to provide care that is evidence-based and to maintain a safe environment for our patients, staff, and community.

Our Recommendation

We follow and recommend only the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) immunization schedule, which is based on extensive research and is designed to protect children at the ages they are most vulnerable. We do not recommend alternative or unproven vaccine schedules.

Working With Families

We understand that families may have questions about vaccines. We are happy to discuss concerns and, when appropriate, work with families on vaccine timing. However, children must continue to make progress toward full immunization and meet the minimum vaccine requirements listed below to remain patients in our practice.

Minimum Vaccine Requirements

By 4 months

- DTaP-Hib-IPV: First dose started

By 12 months

- DTaP-Hib-IPV: At least 3 doses
- Pneumococcal (PCV): At least 3 doses

By 15 months

- MMR: First dose

By 18 months

- DTaP-Hib-IPV: Fourth dose
- Pneumococcal (PCV): Fourth dose
- Varicella: First dose

By 6 years

- DTaP-IPV: One dose
- MMR: Second dose
- Varicella: Second dose

By 12 years

- Tdap: One dose

*These are minimum requirements, not alternative schedules. Meeting minimum vaccine standards requires following the recommended timing and spacing between doses. Our providers adhere to established AAP guidelines for safe and effective vaccine intervals. More information is available at <https://www.chop.edu/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-schedule>.

Community Safety

Required vaccines are selected based on local disease prevalence and our obligation to protect patients, families, staff, and the broader community.

If Requirements Are Not Met

Families who are unable or unwilling to meet these vaccine requirements will be asked to transfer care to another practice whose vaccination approach better fits their preferences.

Vaccine Refusal After Preparation

We understand that, on occasion, a parent or guardian may decide not to proceed with a vaccine after it has been discussed, consented to, and prepared. If a vaccine has already been drawn up, our staff will make every reasonable effort to safely use it for another patient in accordance with storage and handling guidelines. If this is not possible and the vaccine must be

discarded, the family will be responsible for the cost of the unused vaccine. The cost will be reviewed with the family prior to checkout.

Acknowledgment

By continuing care with Carithers Pediatric Group, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to follow this immunization policy.