



Dear Parents,

We are honored that you have chosen Allentown Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine as your pediatric office. As pediatricians, we look forward to partnering with you over the years so your child may enjoy good health.

One of the most important aspects of pediatric care is ensuring your child is fully immunized. We believe in the safety and efficacy of vaccinations. We believe that the decline of many infectious diseases, such as polio and bacterial meningitis, and the virtual elimination of others, such as diphtheria and rubella, is the result of a successful and ongoing childhood vaccination program.

When parents choose not to vaccinate, they not only place their child at risk for contracting a preventable and potentially fatal disease, but they also place others in the community at risk. Unvaccinated children can serve as carriers, introducing a germ to children too young to be vaccinated, elderly family members and friends, or people undergoing treatment for cancer or other serious medical conditions.

It is ironic that the tremendous success of our childhood immunization program has allowed some parents to question the need for vaccines because the daily threat of paralytic polio or blinding measles or diphtheria does not exist, as it did years ago. However, vaccine preventable infections do still exist, even in our community. We are currently experiencing an alarming measles outbreak in New York State and in 27 additional states throughout the United States and in several countries around the world. There have been recent outbreaks of pertussis or whooping cough in our community. Polio still exists globally and there was a near death from a tetanus infection of an unimmunized child in Oregon. In our global society, it is of upmost importance that we maintain a strong and universal vaccine program in order to prevent our children from getting these still present devastating diseases.

Because of this very real and ever-present risk of coming into contact with vaccine preventable infectious diseases and our responsibility to protect our vulnerable patients in our practice, Allentown Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine modified its immunization policy on January 1, 2017. **We no longer accept patients who are not immunized and who do not comply with our immunization schedule.**

At each well child visit we will discuss the age appropriate vaccines with you. We will be happy to address questions and concerns you may have about vaccines. We hope that you will agree that the best medical treatment for your child is to have your child fully vaccinated, adhering to the immunization schedule designed to protect your child as soon as possible against serious and potentially life-threatening infections. Not only do we feel responsible for keeping your child healthy, but it is also our duty as pediatricians to ensure the health of the entire community.

Sincerely,

Deborah Raiken, M.D.
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Danielle Conley, M.D.
Mary Sheppard, PNP
Anna Couell, FNP