

## **EINSTEIN PHYSICIANS MONTGOMERY VACCINE POLICY STATEMENT**

Our physicians and nurse practitioners have done our best to support families who are concerned about vaccinating their children. Our philosophy has been that it is our role to provide reasoned, scientific information that can help alleviate those concerns and ultimately encourage all parents to comply with the recommendations of the medical community. There are parents that have chosen to not vaccinate their children, or that they have found a schedule of vaccination that they feel is safer than the schedule recommended by health care experts worldwide. Groups in our society that use the Internet to spread a variety of untruths have promoted this phenomenon. Numerous worldwide scientific studies have confirmed the safety of vaccines.

Recent events have caused us to re-evaluate our policy regarding unvaccinated or under-vaccinated children using our practice for health care. Around the country, the actions of relatively few parents have put many of the most vulnerable at risk. Whooping cough and measles are now in full resurgence. These diseases are life threatening, especially to our youngest patients. Infants and those undergoing chemotherapy may be unprotected against these diseases. Additionally, children exposed to diseases such as measles require weeks of quarantine creating a tremendous burden to working parents. In the face of recent outbreaks, we no longer have the option of supporting families who choose not to vaccinate or to delay recommended vaccines. Many of our vaccine-compliant patients have voiced concern about possible exposure in our health care facilities. It is our duty to provide the safest environment possible to receive health care.

At Einstein Physicians Montgomery

- We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.
- We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.
- We firmly believe that all children should receive all the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).
- We firmly believe, based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

All the children of our doctors and nurse practitioners have been fully vaccinated. All our providers believe that vaccinating your children may be the *single most important* health-promoting and life-saving intervention that you can perform as parents. Public health policy exists to promote the well-being of all the children in our community.

**Effective September 1, 2019 our practice will not accept new families that do not vaccinate their children. Established patients that are behind on the State of Pennsylvania required vaccines will be given enough notice and time to bring their children up to date.** Most of our patients are current on their vaccines. Patients that are behind on the required vaccines will be given one month to begin to comply with our new policy. If your child is behind, we will provide easy access to getting your child up to date.

Our policy states:

1. All children must receive all vaccines recommended by the AAP that are mandated for school entry by the State of Pennsylvania, including the complete Hib and Prevnar series.
2. All children must begin receiving their immunizations at age 2 months and be up to date on all required vaccines (including MMR and Varicella) by the age of 2 years.
3. We fervently recommend utilizing the immunization schedule as determined by the AAP and CDC.
4. If a parent or caregiver elects to limit their child to 2 vaccines at a time, they must come into the office at 2-4-week intervals to stay within the recommended “window” for the vaccines.
5. If a parent or caregiver elects to limit their child to 1 vaccine at a time, they must come into the office at weekly intervals to stay within the recommended “window” for the vaccines.
6. All parents who do not follow the CDC routine vaccine guidelines must sign a waiver that they are utilizing an alternate vaccine schedule. This schedule must be approved by a physician or nurse practitioner.
7. Exceptions for the CDC window include: Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Influenza, and Gardasil.
8. The Hepatitis B series must be completed by the time of school entry.
9. The Hepatitis A series, although strongly recommended by our providers, may be deferred until such time that Pennsylvania requires it for school entry.
10. The Influenza vaccine is strongly recommended yearly for all children over the age of 6 months; however, it is not mandatory at this time.

11. The Gardasil (Human Papilloma Virus) vaccine series is approved and strongly recommended for older children and teens, ideally between the ages of 11-13, but it is not mandatory at this time.
12. Parents or caregivers who do not agree with the Einstein Physicians Montgomery vaccine policy will be given a 1-month grace period to find another medical practice. We do not keep a list of such providers and will not be able to provide families with names of physicians who accept families who choose not to vaccinate their children. Please recognize that by not vaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, even death.