



Vaccine Policy

At Keanuenue Pediatrics, LLC, we believe that vaccinations are safe, effective, and save lives. As pediatricians, vaccinating children to prevent disease is one of the most important things we do. Agreeing on this fundamental tenet of child health is vital to ensuring a strong therapeutic partnership with our team.

For this reason, we require our patients to follow the vaccination schedule recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and approved by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Vaccines, which prevent harmful diseases, are an essential part of providing excellent pediatric care, so we do not space out or delay them.

Up-to-date vaccination is required for a child to be seen as a patient in our practice. If you have concerns about vaccines, please discuss them with your child's provider.

Frequently Asked Questions About Vaccines:

Q: Why are vaccines important?

Vaccines help prevent dangerous diseases that can cause serious illness, long-term complications, and even death in children. They not only protect your child but also others they come in contact with.

Q: Are vaccines safe?

Vaccines undergo extensive safety testing before being approved for use. They are monitored for safety concerns even after approval. The benefits far outweigh potential risks. Serious side effects are very rare.

Q: What is in vaccines?

Ingredients include the antigen that triggers the immune response, as well as other ingredients like preservatives, adjuvants to boost effectiveness, and small amounts of other substances. All ingredients have been rigorously tested for safety.

Q: Do vaccines overload my child's immune system?

No. From the moment a child is born, they are exposed to numerous bacteria and viruses on a daily basis. Vaccines only contain a tiny fraction of the antigens they encounter naturally.

Q: Can't I just delay or space out vaccines?

Delaying vaccines leaves your child vulnerable to disease for longer and can interfere with building proper immunity. The recommended schedule has been studied, validated, and therefore designed to optimally protect children at the earliest possible age.

Common Vaccine Concerns:

- "Vaccines cause autism."
 - *No evidence supports a link between vaccines and autism. The original paper suggesting a link was retracted and found fraudulent. The doctor who published the paper has since been discredited and his medical license revoked. What he published is not true and has never been able to be proven in numerous follow up studies.*
- "Vaccines contain toxic chemicals."
 - *Vaccines contain several types of ingredients, each with a specific purpose:*
 - *The active component (weakened or inactivated germs, or pieces of germs)*
 - *Preservatives to prevent contamination*
 - *Stabilizers to maintain effectiveness*
 - *Adjuvants to help boost the immune response*
 - *While some vaccine ingredients might sound concerning when viewed in isolation, it's important to understand that:*
 - **Dose makes the difference:** *Many substances in our environment can be harmful at high doses but are completely safe at the tiny amounts present in vaccines.*
 - **Context matters:** *Ingredients are carefully selected and tested for safety in combination with other components.*
 - **Extensive testing:** *Before any vaccine is approved, it undergoes rigorous safety testing involving thousands of people.*
 - **Continuous monitoring:** *Even after approval, vaccines are continuously monitored for safety.*
- "Natural immunity is better."
 - *While natural infection can confer immunity, the price paid is often high - either severe illness or complications like brain damage or death. Vaccines provide immunity safely.*
- "New vaccines aren't tested enough."
 - *Before being approved, all vaccines undergo rigorous clinical trials with thousands of participants to assure safety and effectiveness. Ongoing safety monitoring continues after approval as well.*
- "If Hepatitis B is transmitted by sex and drugs, why does my baby need to get the vaccine at birth?"

- *Hepatitis B can be passed from mother to baby during birth if the mother is infected. Getting the vaccine beginning at birth helps protect infants of mothers who may unknowingly be carriers.*
- *Children can be exposed to hepatitis B at a young age in ways other than sexual contact or drugs. For example, they may come in contact with contaminated blood. Vaccinating universally helps prevent spread.*
- *It's easier on your baby's immune system to follow the recommended schedule than to try catching up later if they are exposed. Delaying the vaccine leaves them vulnerable.*
- *Even if your baby isn't at high risk now, their risk factors may change as they get older. Getting vaccinated now means they'll already be protected.*
- *Hepatitis B can spread through:*
 - ***Mother-to-baby transmission:*** *A mother who has Hepatitis B can transmit it to her baby during childbirth, even if she doesn't know she's infected*
 - ***Household contact:*** *The virus can spread through exposure to even tiny amounts of infected blood from household members (like sharing toothbrushes or razors)*
 - ***Casual contact with blood:*** *Children may encounter blood from playground injuries or other everyday situations*

Why vaccinate at birth?

- ***Critical protection window:*** *Infants who contract Hepatitis B have a 90% chance of developing chronic infection, compared to only 5% of adults*
- ***Lifelong consequences:*** *Infants with chronic Hepatitis B face a higher lifetime risk of liver failure, liver cancer, and premature death*
- ***Universal approach:*** *Since many adults don't know they're infected, waiting to identify high-risk situations can miss protecting vulnerable babies*
- ***Building immunity early:*** *Starting at birth provides complete protection before any potential exposure*

Safety considerations

- *The Hepatitis B vaccine has an excellent safety record after decades of use and millions of doses. The protection it provides has dramatically reduced Hepatitis B rates in children since it became a standard birth dose.*

The most up-to-date CDC vaccination schedule can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/downloads/child/0-18yrs-child-combined-schedule.pdf>