

**Glasgow Pediatrics/ Greensburg Healthcare
Policy on Newborn Nursery Care
Effective November 1, 2011**

We at Glasgow Pediatrics and Greensburg Healthcare follow the American Academy of Pediatric guidelines in regards to newborn care. We recommended that all our patients receive vitamin K, newborn screen, hearing screen and hepatitis B vaccination while in the newborn nursery. We will not be seeing newborns in the nursery or in the office whose parents decline these recommendations.

We do not feel that we can provide adequate care to families who refuse all our recommendations. We are not the right medical home for these families.

**Glasgow Pediatrics/Greensburg Healthcare
Policy on Immunizations
Effective September 22, 2011**

We at Glasgow Pediatrics and Greensburg Healthcare care about the health of all the children we see. As a result, we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines on immunizations. The practice of pediatrics is about prevention. This includes the prevention of diseases that may manifest in adulthood such as diabetes and obesity and those that may cause life-threatening diseases in childhood such as pertussis and pneumococcal meningitis.

We will no longer be seeing children whose parents decline all immunizations without a medical reason. We will be discussing this policy with our current families at their next check-ups. It will be necessary for families who continue to decline all immunizations to find a new medical home. We cannot protect our newborns, premature infants, and children with immunodeficiencies if we continue to expose them to children who are not vaccinated.

We will continue to work with those families who have alternative vaccination schedules and take these families on a case-by-case basis.

DON'T BUY IN TO THE HYPE

Immunizations save children's lives

By MELISSA DENNISON, MD

RECENTLY, IMMUNIZATIONS HAVE been openly criticized because of one study that tried to link vaccines to autism. It doesn't matter that the physician who authored the study has been convicted of falsifying information.

Parents still often refuse to have their children vaccinated and often believe information they have read on the Internet is more trustworthy than information given to them by their pediatrician. Unfortunately, anyone can post something on the Internet, and often this information is just plain false.



Melissa Dennison, MD

Do children end up getting a lot of vaccines? Yes, they do. However, if you compare the cost and pain of the vaccines to the cost and pain of the illnesses they prevent, the vaccines are proven very beneficial. A lot of parents will say that their child doesn't need vaccines because he or she never gets sick. If you are lucky enough to say this, the reason you can is because you live in an area where other parents vaccinate their children.

We are lucky enough to not live in a country where endemic polio is found. Does anyone remember how polio affected our grandparents' generation, leaving many dead and others paralyzed? While I am young enough to say that I have only diagnosed polio once, I am old enough to have seen the effects of varicella, or chickenpox. While varicella is felt to be a childhood disease that most of us

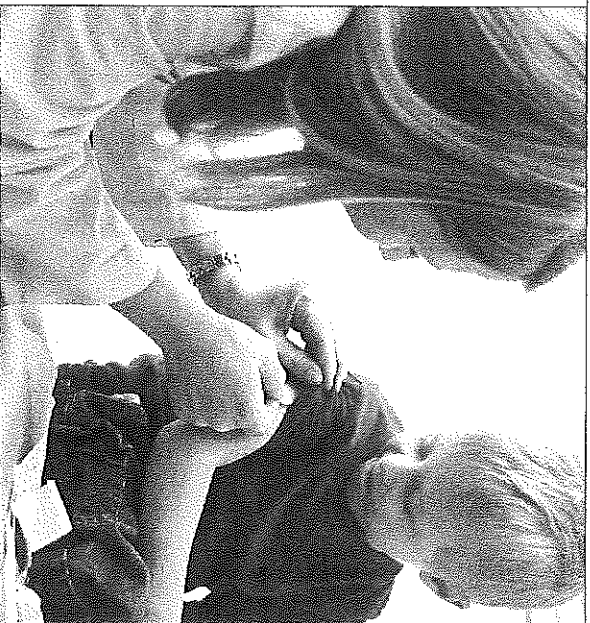
had and did not suffer complications from, it still causes 100 deaths a year. Having had a patient die of chickenpox, I can say that it is not a benign disease.

WIDESPREAD BENEFITS The *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) vaccine has changed my practice of medicine more than any other. While in pediatric residency in the early '80s, we treated many children with meningitis, seizures, deafness and mental retardation, all caused by Hib. Today, with the Hib vaccine readily available, I rarely see infection caused by this particular type of bacteria.

Measles is another example of a vaccine-preventable disease with serious consequences. Currently in the U.S., up to 20 percent of people with measles are hospitalized. If vaccinations were stopped, 2.7 million deaths per year could be expected worldwide. Recently, an unvaccinated child caught the measles in Switzerland, returned to the U.S. and infected 11 unvaccinated children in San Diego. This was the highest number of cases that San Diego had seen in 17 years.

In order for vaccines to protect everyone, an estimated 85 to 95 percent of the population must be immunized. Studies have shown that children who are not immunized are more likely to become infected with measles and Pertussis, or whooping cough, which is very present in this community.

Any mother who has seen her infant turn blue from whooping cough would tell you to get your children immunized. Young children are always the most vulnerable, with 90 percent of deaths from pertussis occurring in infants younger than 6 months of age.



TIMING IS ESSENTIAL. It is not advisable to skip or delay vaccines, as this will leave the child vulnerable to disease for a longer period of time. Parents should follow the immunization schedule provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Family Physicians. This schedule is designed by experts to ensure maximum protection and safety for children at various ages. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their child's pediatrician. All of the physicians at Glasgow Pediatrics are board-certified by the American Academy of Pediatrics and abide by its recommendations. We encourage our patients to be vaccinated according to the schedule it recommends.

We hope you choose to vaccinate your child. If your child does have an adverse reaction to a vaccine, let your health care provider know. That reaction needs to be documented and reported to the vaccine manufacturer.

Dr. Dennison is a pediatrician with Glasgow Pediatrics. To learn more, call 270-651-9696.