

Pediatric Association of Naturopathic Physicians Position Paper on Vaccinations¹

As advocates of preventive medicine, we believe vaccines are a scientifically sound and effective method of preventing infectious diseases. We recommend immunizations to protect children and adults from adverse consequences of infectious disease, as immunization is included under the naturopathic principle of *Prevention*.

Vaccination contributes to less utilization of medications and invasive treatments for complications of vaccine-preventable diseases, and is supported by the naturopathic principle of *First Do No Harm*. Immunizations are well documented to be among the safest preventative measures available against the diseases they prevent and are therefore also supported by this principle.

The naturopathic precept of *Doctor as Teacher* directs us to provide unbiased, complete information to patients and/or parents about vaccinations.

Many families are excused from or refused entry to pediatric medical practices due to their vaccination hesitation, resistance, or requests for an alternative vaccination schedule, and they therefore may seek out naturopathic physicians for care and vaccine guidance. This situation places naturopathic physicians in an opportune position to provide information and vaccine coverage to those patients who might otherwise receive no vaccines at all.

It is our hope to provide a community resource to physicians, medical students and the greater community to help prevent infectious disease through the schedule provided by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

¹ This position paper is an adapted from a position paper proposed by the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians.