



PedANP

PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION OF
NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS

Position on Vaccination: A Statement of the PedANP

Immunization reduces the individual and societal consequences of vaccine-preventable disease (including morbidity, mortality, absenteeism, and cost of illness management). Vaccination programs protect vulnerable populations who are most at risk of infection and/or cannot receive these vaccines. The bulk of the publicly available evidence demonstrates that the collective benefit of vaccination programs outweighs their cost. As such, immunization programs are an important component of preventative medicine. (Primum non nocere, Praevenire)

As with all medical interventions, the individual decision to vaccinate requires informed consent. This necessitates an understanding of the risks and benefits of each vaccine, as well as the consequences to both the individual and the community of the disease against which it protects. Families have been excused from or refused entry to pediatric medical practices due to vaccine hesitancy,¹ and may seek out naturopathic doctors for care and guidance.² Naturopathic doctors are competent in scientific literacy and are equipped to neutrally discuss the recommended vaccination schedules in the jurisdictions in which they practice. Engaging hesitant patients in neutral inquiry and education may result in increased vaccine coverage.³ Naturopathic doctors take the necessary time and patient-centered approach to support families in making informed decisions. (Docere)

Vaccination is one part of a comprehensive, holistic strategy to reduce the incidence of disease and promote wellness in individuals and communities. Many naturopathic doctors include vaccination in the services they provide. All naturopathic doctors promote health and prevent disease in a range of other ways, such as supporting immune system function through optimizing nutrition, physical activity, sleep, stress management, and safe and effective management of acute and chronic illnesses. (Tolle totum)

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29175699>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29175699>

³ Jarrett, C., Wilson, R., O'Leary, M., Eckersberger, E., & Larson, H. J. (2015). Strategies for addressing vaccine hesitancy—A systematic review. *Vaccine*, 33(34), 4180-4190.