

# Record of Vaccine Declination

I am the parent/guardian of the child named at the bottom of this form. My healthcare provider has recommended that my child be vaccinated against the diseases indicated below. I have been given a copy of the Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) that explains the benefits and risks of receiving each of the vaccines recommended for my child. I have carefully reviewed and considered all of the information given to me. However, at this time I choose to refuse the vaccine(s) for my child that are shown in the table below. I have read and acknowledge the following:

- I understand that vaccine-preventable diseases can infect unvaccinated U.S. children and can result in hospitalization and even death.
- I understand that vaccine-preventable infections that are no longer common in the U.S. still occur around the world. An unvaccinated child can be infected while traveling, or through direct or indirect contact with a traveler.
- I understand that my unvaccinated child could spread disease to another child who is too young to be vaccinated or to a person whose medical condition, such as cancer, or immune system problems, prevents them from being vaccinated. This could result in health complications and even death for the other person.
- I understand that if too many parents exempted their child from vaccination, these diseases would return to our community in full force.
- I understand that my unvaccinated child may not be protected by “herd” or “community” immunity (i.e., protection that is the result of having most people in a population vaccinated against a disease).
- I understand that some vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and pertussis are extremely infectious and have been known to infect unvaccinated people living in highly vaccinated populations.
- I understand that if my child is not vaccinated and gets infected, my child could develop serious complications. These may include pneumonia, hospitalization, brain damage, paralysis, seizures, deafness, and death.
- I understand that my child may be excluded from his or her child care facility, school, sports events, or other organized activities during disease outbreaks. This means my child and I could miss many days of school and/or work.
- I understand that the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all recommend preventing diseases through vaccination.

Vaccine / Disease	VIS given (✓)	Vaccine recommended by doctor or nurse (Dr./Nurse initials)	I decline this vaccination for my child (Initials of parent/guardian)
COVID-19			
Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTaP)			
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib)			
Hepatitis A (HepA)			
Hepatitis B (HepB)			
Human papillomavirus (HPV)			
Influenza			
Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR)			
Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY)			
Meningococcal B (MenB)			
Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)			
Polio, inactivated (IPV)			
Rotavirus (RV)			
Tetanus-diphtheria (Td)			
Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap)			
Varicella (Var)			

After discussion with my provider who recommends these vaccines, I acknowledge that I am declining to have my child vaccinated against one or more diseases listed above. I have placed my initials in the table above to indicate the vaccine(s) I am declining. I understand that I can change my decision in the future and have my child vaccinated.

CHILD'S NAME	DATE OF BIRTH
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	DATE
DOCTOR/NURSE SIGNATURE	DATE

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# Additional Information for Healthcare Professionals about Immunize.org’s “Record of Vaccine Declination”

Unfortunately, some parents will refuse to have their child receive some vaccines. For healthcare providers who want to assure that these parents fully understand the consequences of their decision, Immunize.org has produced a form titled “Record of Vaccine Declination.” This form facilitates and documents the discussion that a healthcare professional can have with parents about the risks of not having their child vaccinated before the child leaves the medical setting.

Your use of the “Record of Vaccine Declination” demonstrates the importance you place on timely and complete vaccination, focuses the parents’ attention on the unnecessary risk for which they are accepting responsibility, and may encourage a vaccine-hesitant parent to accept your recommendations. According to an American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) survey on immunization practices, almost all pediatricians reported that when faced with parents who refuse vaccination, they attempt to educate parents regarding the importance of immunization and document the refusal in the patient’s medical record.<sup>1</sup>

Your recommendation can make a difference. Vaccine recommendations from the child’s healthcare provider can strongly influence a parent’s final vaccination decision.<sup>2</sup> Most parents trust their children’s doctor for vaccine-safety information (76% endorsed “a lot of trust”), according to researchers from the University of Michigan.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, analyses of the 2009 HealthStyles Survey found that the vast majority of parents (81.7%) name their child’s doctor or nurse as the most

important source that helped them make decisions about vaccinating their child.<sup>4</sup> Gust and colleagues found that the advice of their children’s healthcare provider was the main factor in changing the minds of parents who had been reluctant to vaccinate their children or who had delayed their children’s vaccinations.<sup>5</sup> Vaccine-hesitant parents who felt satisfied with their pediatricians’ discussion of vaccination most often chose vaccination for their child.<sup>6</sup>

All parents and patients should be informed about vaccination risks and benefits by following these steps:

- Give the appropriate Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) to the parent or legal representative before each vaccine is given. This is required by federal law.
- When parents refuse a recommended vaccine, document that you provided the VIS(s), and have the parent sign the “Record of Vaccine Declination.”
- Revisit the vaccination discussion at each subsequent visit. Flag the charts of fully or partially unvaccinated children as a reminder to revisit the vaccination discussion. Flagging also alerts the team about missed vaccinations when evaluating an ill child, especially one who has a fever without a clear source.

## What do others say about documentation of vaccine declination?

**American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):** “The AAP encourages documentation of the health care provider’s discussion with parents about the serious risks of what could happen to an unimmunized or under-immunized child.... For parents who refuse one or more recommended immunizations, document your conversation and the provision of the VIS(s), have a parent sign the *Refusal to Vaccinate* form, and keep the form in the patient’s medical record.”<sup>7</sup>

**Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO):** “To address the risk of VPD [vaccine-preventable disease], states should consider adopting more rigorous standards for non-medical vaccine exemptions that require parents to demonstrate that they have made a conscious, concerted, and informed decision in requesting these exemptions for their children. An example of such a standard might

include a requirement for parents to complete a form that explicitly states the grounds for the exemption and requires them to acknowledge awareness of the disease-specific risks associated with not vaccinating their child(ren).”<sup>8</sup>

**National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO):** NACCHO encourages various steps be taken to limit non-medical exemptions to school immunization requirements. “For individuals requesting [non-medical] exemptions, (1) require documentation from a medical provider regarding the refusal to vaccinate and consultation pertaining to risks; (2) require consultation and signature by the local health department for non-medical exemptions; or (3) implement mandatory education sessions and require acknowledgement of risk or notarized documentation of non-medical exemptions for parents, guardians, or student 18 years and older about the importance of immunization and the impact of refusing immunizations.”<sup>9</sup>

### REFERENCES

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