

Atrium Health Navicent Physicians Urge Families to Stay on Track with Immunizations *National Infant Immunization Week is April 22-29*

MACON, Ga., April 25, 2024 – Atrium Health Navicent encourages parents and caregivers to join the health system in observing National Infant Immunization Week, April 22-29, by ensuring that their children, particularly those ages 2 and younger, stay on track for routine check-ups and recommended vaccinations.

According to the World Health Organization, which also observes World Immunization Week this week, vaccines play a critical role in preventing more than 20 life-threatening diseases, helping people of all ages live longer, healthier lives. Immunization prevents millions of deaths every year from diseases like COVID-19, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, influenza and measles.

“Vaccinations are one of the most effective tools in medicine. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” said Dr. Christy Peterson, an Atrium Health Navicent pediatrician. “We do not want to go back to the way things were before vaccines, when children dying before age 2 was commonplace. Breastfeeding and vaccination together provide such a strong defense against disease that even a breastfed and vaccinated baby born with a compromised immune system is less likely to become sick until after the conclusion of breastfeeding.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 4 million deaths worldwide are prevented by childhood vaccination every year. In fact, vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. Despite this, global immunization coverage for infants dropped to 81 percent in 2021, the lowest rate in over a decade.

The CDC reports that during the 2021–22 school year, national coverage with state-required vaccines among kindergarten students decreased again to approximately 93 percent for all state-required vaccines. An additional 4.4 percent of children were not up to date with measles, mumps and rubella vaccine.

For more information about recommended vaccination schedules for infants, contact your child’s primary care provider. For information about services for children at Atrium Health Levine Children’s Beverly Knight Olson Children’s Hospital, visit ChildrensHospitalNH.org/LevineChildrens.

About Atrium Health Navicent

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of health care in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent is part of [Advocate Health](#), which is headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is the third-largest nonprofit health system in the United States, created from the combination of Atrium Health and Advocate Aurora Health. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation’s leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit www.NavicentHealth.org.

About Advocate Health

[Advocate Health](#) is the third-largest nonprofit integrated health system in the United States – created from the combination of Advocate Aurora Health and [Atrium Health](#). Providing care under the names [Advocate Health Care](#) in Illinois, Atrium Health in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama, and [Aurora Health Care](#) in Wisconsin, Advocate Health is a national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care, with [Wake Forest University School of Medicine](#) serving as the academic core of the enterprise. Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, Advocate Health serves nearly 6 million patients and is engaged in hundreds of clinical trials and research studies. It is nationally recognized for its expertise in cardiology, neurosciences, oncology, pediatrics and rehabilitation, as well as organ transplants, burn treatments and specialized musculoskeletal programs. Advocate Health employs nearly 155,000 team members across 68 hospitals and over 1,000 care locations and offers one of the nation’s largest graduate medical education programs with over 2,000 residents and fellows across more than 200 programs. Committed to equitable care for all, Advocate Health provides nearly \$6 billion in annual community benefits.