



# COVID-19 Vaccination for Children Ages 5 to 11

Misinformation circulating online and by word of mouth can make it hard for parents, caregivers, and others to get the facts and make informed decisions about the COVID-19 vaccine for kids. We created this FAQ to help answer some frequently asked questions about the vaccine.

## Why should my child get the vaccine?

- **The COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to protect your child from being hospitalized or developing long-term symptoms.** COVID-19 is one of the top 10 causes of death among children. Most cases of COVID-19 in children are not severe, but on occasion, COVID-19 can cause serious infections. Children can also have long term health problems from the virus, known as long-COVID.
- **Getting your child vaccinated will also protect family members and friends,** especially those who may be at high risk.
- **Vaccination helps kids be kids.** When kids are up-to-date on vaccines, they can safely do more of the activities they enjoy, like attending birthday parties, playing sports and spending time indoors with friends and family members.

## Is the child vaccine safe and effective?

Yes. The FDA determined that the vaccine had no serious safety concerns identified in clinical studies and was over 90% effective at preventing severe illness from coronavirus in kids. An early study suggests that the vaccine isn't as effective at preventing kids from getting infected, but it provides protection where it matters most: the vaccine prevents hospitalization, severe health problems, and death.

## What age do kids need to be to get vaccinated?

Everyone 5 years and older should get the COVID-19 vaccine. The FDA may approve the vaccine for younger children in the spring of 2022.

## What type of vaccine is available for children?

Currently, only the Pfizer vaccine is authorized for use in children ages 5 to 11. The Pfizer vaccine is authorized for emergency use.

# Frequently Asked Questions About Vaccine For Children (continued)

## Is the vaccine for children the same as the vaccine for 12 and over?

No. The Pfizer vaccine is specially formulated for children. The vaccine for children is made the same way, but it is a smaller dose:

- 10 micrograms for kids
- 30 micrograms for teens/adults

## How many doses of vaccine do kids ages 5 to 11 get?

Children 5 to 11 years should get 2 doses, given 3 weeks apart.

## What ingredients are in the kids' vaccine?

The active ingredient, mRNA, is the same for the Pfizer vaccine for 12+ and the one for 5-to-11-year-olds. The Pfizer vaccine for ages 5 to 11 contains an amino alcohol that helps the vaccine last longer at refrigerated temperatures. The vaccine for 12 and older uses different stabilizers (potassium chloride, potassium phosphate, and sodium phosphate). Both versions of the Pfizer vaccine also contain the same lipids (fats), sodium chloride (salt), and sucrose (sugar).

## Is the vaccine kids free?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccine is always free. COVID-19 vaccines are available at no cost to everyone living in the United States, regardless of insurance or immigration status.

## Should I expect that my child will have side effects?

Your child may feel similar to how they have felt after getting other childhood vaccines. These are normal signs that their body is building protection. Possible side effects may include:

- Sore arm
- Body aches
- Fever

Possible side effects are temporary and usually go away in 1 to 2 days.



# Frequently Asked Questions About Vaccine For Children (continued)

## **Is there a link between myocarditis and the vaccine for kids?**

In very rare cases, people have developed inflammation of the heart muscle following vaccination with mRNA vaccines. The inflammation is known as myocarditis and it goes away quickly with treatment. In the clinical trial in children, there were no cases of myocarditis in the three-month follow-up period after vaccination. The clinical trial is ongoing, and the CDC and FDA have systems in place to continue to monitor and detect possible reactions or other uncommon side effects.

## **What should I do to prepare for my child's vaccination visit?**

- Have your child wear short sleeves or loose-fitting sleeves that are easy to roll up.
- Be honest with your child: Your child needs to know that they will be getting a shot. The shot will hurt for a moment or feel like a pinch.
- Bring a book or small toy for your child to use during the appointment and short waiting period after vaccination.

## **Is there a fertility/development concern with vaccinating children before they reach puberty?**

No. There is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, can cause female or male fertility problems. Millions of women have become pregnant after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Unvaccinated women have a higher risk of death or death of their baby than women who were vaccinated against COVID-19.

## **What vaccine should a child get if they turn 12 after their first dose of the children's vaccine but before the second dose is due?**

Unlike other medications, vaccine dosages are based on age and not size or weight. If a child turns from 11 to 12 years of age in between their first and second dose, the second dose should be the Pfizer vaccine for adolescents and adults. However, if the child receives the Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 years for their second dose, they do not need to get an additional dose.

**Want to check the facts on the COVID-19 vaccine? Go to:**

[kingcounty.gov/covid/vaccinefaq](https://kingcounty.gov/covid/vaccinefaq)