

COVID-19 Vaccines for Children 5-11: What Parents Need to Know

Children ages 5 and up can now receive a COVID-19 vaccine after approval from doctors and scientists at the FDA and CDC. **This vaccine is safe and highly effective against COVID-19 disease in children.**

The Delta variant has put children at increased risk for severe symptoms and hospitalization. Children who get the vaccine will receive **strong protection** against COVID-19 disease caused by all known variants of the virus. Vaccinated children will also be less likely to spread the virus to others, helping keep our families and communities safe from COVID-19.



Will children receive the same vaccine as adults?

Yes, but in a smaller dose. The vaccine for children is the same Pfizer vaccine that has been given to billions of people around the world since December 2020. Children will receive a smaller dose that is one-third the size of the adult dose.

The Pfizer vaccine uses messenger RNA (mRNA) to create antibodies that can fight off the COVID-19 virus. The vaccine does not change a person's DNA and cannot give a person COVID-19.

Is the vaccine safe?

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for children. No safety issues related to the vaccine were reported during the research trial for children ages 5-11.

A small number of people have had myocarditis - a very rare, treatable heart condition - after vaccination. The risk of myocarditis in children is extremely low. Among vaccinated 12-17 year-olds, the risk was less than 1 in 10,000. Children are more likely to have myocarditis after getting sick with COVID-19 than after vaccination.

Children should not get the vaccine if they have a history of severe allergic reaction to any of the vaccine's ingredients.



What are the side effects?

Children ages 5-11 had side effects similar to those experienced by people age 12 and older. The most common side effects included:

- Pain, redness, and swelling where the shot was given
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Fever

These side effects typically last 1 to 3 days. In the trial, children experienced less severe side effects compared to adults.

Should my child get the shot?

The benefits of vaccination, like preventing COVID-19 and its possibly severe complications, greatly outweigh the potential risks of a rare negative reaction, including myocarditis.

Though children are less likely to experience severe COVID-19 illness, the Delta variant has been causing more cases in children, including more hospitalizations. COVID-19 hospitalization rates for Native American children are three times higher than for white children.

Children 5 and older are recommended to get the COVID-19 vaccine to protect them from the virus and to help keep our communities safe.