



COVID-19 VACCINE EDUCATION *and* EQUITY PROJECT

KIDS AND COVID-19 VACCINES

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About Vaccinating Children

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) now recommends that everyone aged 6 months and older get vaccinated against COVID-19. While compared with adults, children are at a lower risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19, children can:

- Get infected with the virus that causes COVID-19
- Get very sick from COVID-19
- Have both short and long-term health complications from COVID-19
- Spread the COVID-19 virus to others

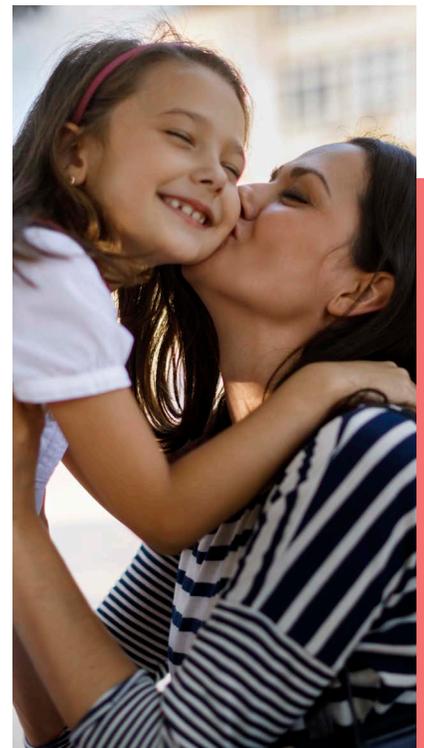
Many parents and caregivers have been eager to get their young children vaccinated, but there are some common questions asked about the vaccine.

Is the vaccine effective in young children?

Yes. COVID 19-vaccines are effective and can reduce the risk of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. The clinical trial data shows that the vaccine is effective in preventing both asymptomatic and symptomatic COVID-19 infection in children and adolescents. The CDC recommends that all eligible children and adolescents should remain up to date with recommended COVID-19 vaccinations, including a booster dose for everyone age 5 and older, when eligible.

Is the vaccine safe?

Yes. The clinical trial data shows that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for young children, protecting them from getting infected with the virus and preventing against severe illness. All authorized and approved COVID-19 vaccines have undergone – and will continue to undergo – the most comprehensive and intense safety monitoring program in U.S. history to ensure their safety.



What are the side effects of the vaccine in young children?

The COVID-19 vaccine can cause mild side effects, like a sore arm, headache, muscle and/or joint pain, fever, chills, fatigue, or decreased appetite that may last a day or two. These are common signs that the body is responding to the vaccine and building up immunity to the virus. According to the FDA, no serious side effects from the COVID-19 have been detected in children.

Is the dose for children the same as the dose for adults?

No, the dosage for younger children is lower than for children over 12 and adults. COVID-19 vaccine dosage is based on age on the day of vaccination, not on a child's size or weight.



I've heard that COVID-19 doesn't really affect children, so is it necessary to vaccinate kids?

While the risk of serious outcomes is lower in children than it is for adults, more than 14 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in children with some requiring hospitalization and some resulting in death.

The emergence of new strains of the virus like the Omicron variant have led to higher rates of infection among children and more children becoming seriously ill. Children with underlying medical conditions are at greater risk for severe illness. Infections can lead to troubling complications like multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C – a serious illness that causes severe inflammation in many vital organs such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain). Sick children can also spread the disease to those more vulnerable to infection.

If a child has already had COVID-19, do they still need to get a vaccine?

Yes. If your child has recovered from COVID-19, they should still get vaccinated to reduce the risk of reinfection and help protect them – and the people around them. The vaccine is the best way to ensure strong and lasting protection against the virus.

If my child is 11, should we wait to get them the higher, adult dose at age 12?

While you should discuss waiting to get your 11-year-old vaccinated against COVID-19 with your child's healthcare provider, it is important to understand that the lower dosage provided to 5-11-year-olds provides as robust an immune response as the higher dosage did in older kids.





Can children get the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other routine vaccines?

Yes. Given the importance of routine vaccinations and the need for more children to be vaccinated against COVID-19, the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics (“AAP”) support kids getting routine immunizations at the same time that they get a COVID-19 vaccine (or in the days before or after). This is particularly important for children who may have missed vaccinations during the pandemic or are due for immunizations.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine give a child COVID-19?

No, the vaccines cannot give anyone COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use in the U.S. do not contain any part of the live virus that causes COVID-19.

Can children receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster?

Children ages 5 and older should receive an updated booster 2 months after their last shot – primary series or booster.

Where can I get my child vaccinated?

The federal government is providing the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States, regardless of their immigration or health insurance status. Check with your child’s healthcare provider and/ or your local pharmacy about whether they offer COVID-19 vaccination. You can also search [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you.

Does COVID-19 vaccine cause infertility for kids?

No, the COVID-19 vaccine does not cause infertility in children or adults. According to the [American Academy of Pediatrics](https://www.aapublications.org/): “There is no evidence that the vaccine can lead to loss of fertility. While fertility was not specifically studied in the clinical trials of the vaccine, no loss of fertility has been reported among trial participants or among the millions who have received the vaccines since their authorization, and no signs of infertility appeared in animal studies.” The AAP also noted that there is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine affects puberty.



Sources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/downloads/pdf/19-covid-19-vaccines-for-children-and-teens.pdf) (Updated July 21, 2022)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics: COVID-19 Vaccines in Children and Adolescents](https://www.aapublications.org/) (Updated December 20, 2021)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics: Children and COVID-19: State-Level Data Report](https://www.aapublications.org/) (Updated July 21, 2022)
- [Food and Drug Administration: FDA Authorizes Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for Emergency Use in Children 5 through 11 Years of Age](https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/medical-products/updates-to-the-fda-emergency-preparedness-response-recovery-vaccine-authorization-list) (Updated October 29, 2021)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Choosing Your COVID-19 Booster Shot](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/downloads/pdf/19-covid-19-boosters.pdf) (Updated July 20, 2022)