

# WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER RECEIVING THE COVID-19 VACCINE FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

As the science related to the COVID-19 virus continues to evolve, so do the recommendations from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Please ensure you are adhering to the latest public health and safety measures and monitoring recommendations from the CDC.

## What age groups are eligible for the vaccine?

- The CDC recommends everyone ages 6 months and older get a COVID-19 vaccine to help protect against COVID-19. The FDA has given the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine emergency authorization to use in children 6 months to 17 years of age and the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine was granted emergency authorization for use in children ages 6 months-11 years old, and full approval for use in people ages 12 years and older. The Novavax vaccine has also been authorized for use in the primary series of COVID-19 vaccination for those 18 years of age and older.

## Are children eligible for COVID-19 vaccine booster shots?

- Children ages 6 months and older are currently eligible for an updated COVID booster if it has been at least two months since their last shot- booster or primary series.

Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Choosing Your COVID-19 Booster Shot](#) (Updated January 9, 2023) and [Centers for Disease Control: Clinical Guidance for COVID-19 Vaccination](#) (Updated December 9, 2022)



## How effective is the COVID-19 vaccine for children under 5?

- CDC data shows that COVID-19 vaccination continues to protect children under 5 against severe outcomes from COVID-19, including hospitalizations and long-term complications. The vaccines are safe, and the CDC recommends that all eligible children remain up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines, including a booster dose for everyone ages 6 months and older.

Sources: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Why Children and Teens Should Get Vaccinated Against COVID-19](#) (Updated December 22, 2022); [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters](#) (Updated January 9, 2023)

## Do kids under 5 get the same dosage as adults?

- No. Children get a smaller dose of COVID-19 vaccine than teens and adults that is the right amount for their age group. Younger children should receive two doses three weeks apart and then a third dose at least two months after the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines or two doses of the Moderna vaccine, 28 days apart.

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Source: [Centers for Disease Prevention and Control: 6 Things to Know about COVID-19 Vaccination for Children](#) (Updated October 5, 2022)

## Are the vaccines safe?

- Yes. All authorized and approved COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are safe, effective, and help protect you from getting COVID-19. These vaccines can also help keep you from severe illness if you are infected by COVID-19.
- Millions of people in the United States have safely received COVID-19 vaccines. The vaccines have undergone and will continue to undergo safety monitoring, including both well-established and new safety monitoring systems designed to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.

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Sources: [CDC – Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines](#) (Updated December 22, 2022)

## Why is it important to vaccinate children?

- COVID-19 vaccines help protect kids from getting COVID-19 and help prevent them from getting very ill if they do get COVID-19.
- With the emergence of variants like Omicron, the number of COVID-19 cases among U.S. children increased significantly.
  - While the risk of serious outcomes is lower in children than it is for adults, more than 15 million children have tested positive for COVID-19 with thousands requiring hospitalization and some resulting in death.<sup>I</sup>
- While most children who become infected with the COVID-19 virus experience only a mild illness, in some rare instances, children have developed a more serious condition – multisystem inflammatory syndrome – that appears to be related to COVID-19 illness. With treatment, most children eventually get better, but in some cases, symptoms worsen quickly and can be fatal.<sup>II</sup>
- Vaccinating kids against COVID-19 also plays a role in protecting the health of the broader community – every child or adult infected with the coronavirus presents an opportunity for the virus to mutate and create a variant; fewer overall infections mean there is less of a chance for dangerous variants.<sup>IV</sup>
- Widespread [vaccination](#) is important to help prevent both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases and limit the spread of the virus, protecting themselves and those around them.

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<sup>I</sup>Source: [American Academy of Pediatrics – Children and COVID-19 State Level Data](#) (Updated January 5, 2023)

<sup>II</sup>Source: [CDC – For Parents: Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children \(MIS-C\) associated with COVID-19](#) (Updated January 3, 2023)

<sup>IV</sup>Source: [Johns Hopkins Medicine – COVID-19 Vaccine: What Parents Need to Know](#) (Updated June 22, 2022)





## Do kids experience post-vaccination side effects?

- While some may not have any side effects at all, kids can experience post-vaccination side effects similar to those felt by adults, which most often include pain, redness and swelling on the arm where they received the shot. Other side effects can include tiredness, headaches, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea.
- These are all normal signs that their body is building protection and should go away in a few days.
- Side effects from the second shot may be more intense than those experienced after the first shot. Contact your child's healthcare provider if redness or tenderness at the vaccination site gets worse after 24 hours and / or if side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be abating after a few days.
- The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination far outweigh any potential side effects.
- You can use v-safe, a free, smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide health check-ins after your child receives a COVID-19 vaccination to report any side effects. V-safe will also remind you about your child's follow-up dose(s).

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Source: [CDC – COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#) (Updated September 14, 2022)

## Will the vaccine give my child COVID-19?

- No. None of the authorized or approved COVID-19 contain SARS-CoV-2 virus, so they cannot give you COVID-19.

## Can COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility?

- There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine affects fertility or reproductive capabilities in adulthood.
- American Society for Reproductive Medicine encourages everyone to get a COVID-19 vaccine, including those who hope to become pregnant in the future.

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Source: [CDC – COVID-19 Vaccines for People Who Would Like to Have a Baby](#) (Updated July 14, 2022)

