



FACTS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR CHILDREN AGES 5 TO 11

January, 2022

I've heard that COVID-19 doesn't affect kids as much, why should I get my child vaccinated?

- Over 6 million children in the United States have been infected by COVID-19. Most infections are mild, and the children fully recover. But, some children have gotten really sick and even died from COVID-19.
- Children who have mild or severe disease can develop "long COVID" where the infection causes long-term health problems.
- Even if your child doesn't get very sick, they can easily spread COVID-19 to others and they will miss out on school and other activities!
- Vaccines are important to make sure children can go to school and activities, play sports, and see their friends!

What is the recommendation for COVID-19 vaccination for children ages 5 to 11?

- Children should receive 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. The second dose should be 3 weeks or more after the first dose. Three doses are recommended for children who are immunocompromised.
- The dose is smaller than the dose for teens and adults, but it is the same vaccine.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine effective and safe for children ages 5 to 11?

- Yes. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was studied in a clinical trial of more than 2,200 children. In the clinical trial, the vaccine was 90% effective in preventing symptomatic cases of COVID-19. No serious side effects were observed.
- Over 4.8 million children of ages 5-11 have safely received at least one dose.

I heard these vaccines were developed quickly. Should I be nervous about getting this vaccine for my child?

- No. The COVID-19 vaccines went through rigorous clinical trials and FDA approval process. No steps were cut.
- Scientists have worked on the technology for these vaccines for decades. We already had a lot of important data before the pandemic started.

Does my child need to keep wearing a mask after getting vaccinated?

- The CDC recommends wearing a mask in areas where there are a lot of COVID cases, even if you are vaccinated.
- Towns, schools, and businesses may have their own rules about wearing masks. It's best to pay attention to local and state recommendations about where to wear a mask.



Should my child get vaccinated if they have already had COVID-19?

- Yes! It is possible to be reinfected after having COVID-19.
- Getting vaccinated after having been infected with COVID-19 will give your child a greater level of protection.

What side effects could my child have from the COVID-19 vaccine?

- Side effects are normal reactions to a vaccine. They mean that your child's immune system is doing what it is supposed to.
- The most common side effect is redness and swelling at the injection site.
- Some children may also experience tiredness, headache, muscle and/or joint pain, chills and fever, swollen lymph nodes, nausea, and decreased appetite.
- We know from many years of vaccine research that if an allergic reaction were to occur, it would happen soon after vaccination.
- There are medical professionals at each vaccine clinic to respond to an allergic reaction. Children must wait 15-minutes after a vaccine is given.



Should I be worried about heart problems as a side effect of the vaccine?

- COVID-19 infection is known to cause heart inflammation, a condition called myocarditis.
- With mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, myocarditis has happened in a small number of people. This condition is very rare but has occurred in some children.
- Regardless of age or risk factors, the risk of myocarditis is lower from vaccination (and less severe) compared to COVID-19 disease.

What if my child is large for their age? Do I need to get them the dosage for teens?

The COVID-19 vaccine activates the immune system to recognize the virus in the future.

- The dose is based on your child's immune system maturity which is related to their age.
- It is not based on body size.
- This is why the child's age is what matters, not their size.



My child is almost 12 years old. Should I wait to get them the dose for teens and adults?

You should not wait. Pediatricians recommend your child get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. Waiting to vaccinate your child leaves them unprotected from COVID-19 longer than necessary.

My child has severe allergies. Can they still get vaccinated?

Talk with your child's doctor if:

- Your child has had an allergic reaction to the ingredients in the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Your child has any other health condition that makes you concerned about getting your child vaccinated.

In most cases, children with severe allergy can be vaccinated safely.

Where can I get my child vaccinated?

FREE walk-in vaccine clinics. All vaccines are administered by medical professionals!

- Downtown Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Square
- Every Wednesday from 11 AM to 7 PM
- Every Saturday from 11 AM to 5 PM



Contact: umwprc@umassmed.edu

For more information



[CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



[worcesterma.gov](https://www.worcesterma.gov)



[mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov)