COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens

Most Children and All Teens Can Get COVID-19 Vaccines

Everyone ages 5 and older is eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccine to help protect against COVID-19.
Following are the currently available COVID-19 vaccines for different age groups in the United States.

	Pfizer BioNTech	Moderna	J&J/ Janssen
4 years and under	No	No	No
5 – 11 years old	Yes	No	No
12 – 17 years old	Yes	No	No
18 years and older	Yes	Yes	Yes

COVID-19 Vaccine Dosage and Administration for Children and Teens

Vaccine type	Age of recipient	Vial cap color denoting formulation	Concentration of mRNA per primary dose	Number of doses in primary series (interval between doses)	Interval between last primary to booster dose
Pfizer-BioNTech	5 – 11 years	Orange	10 µg [1]	2 shots (21 days apart)	Not recommended
Pfizer-BioNTech	12 – 17 years	Purple	30 µg [2]	2 shots (21 days apart)	Not recommended
Pfizer-BioNTech	≥18 years	Purple	30 µg [2]	2 shots (21 days apart)	≥6 months [3]
Moderna	≥18 years	Not applicable	100 µg	2 shots (28 days apart)	≥6 months [3][4]
J&J/ Janssen	≥18 years	Not applicable	5×10^{10} viral particles	1 shot (Not applicable)	≥2 months [5]

This document was updated 11/10/2021 using information and guidance available to-date and is subject to change per emerging guidance.

(1) The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 years has the same active ingredients as the vaccine given to adults and adolescents. However, children ages 5 through 11 years cannot get the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine given to adults and adolescents. In addition, children ages 5 through 11 years receive an age-appropriate dose that is one-third of the adult dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. Smaller needles, designed specifically for children, are also used for children ages 5 through 11 years.

(2) Adolescents ages 12 years and older receive the same dosage of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine as adults.

(3) Teens 18 years and older are eligible for booster dose if they are at high risk of severe COVID-19 or have frequent institutional or occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2

(4) Booster dose for Moderna is only half the primary dose (50 µg).

(5) Everyone 18 years and older are eligible to receive the booster dose.

Co-administration of COVID-19 vaccines with other vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines may be administered without regard to timing of other vaccines. This includes simultaneous administration of COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines on the same day.

If multiple vaccines are administered at a single visit, your provider may administer each injection in a different injection site.

Why Children and Teens Should Get Vaccinated for COVID-19?

While COVID-19 tends to be milder in children compared with adults, it can make children very sick and cause children to be hospitalized. In some situations, the complications from infection can lead to death.

Although children are at a lower risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19 compared with adults, children can

- Be 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 COVID-19 to others

Children with underlying medical conditions are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 compared with children without underlying medical conditions. Children who get infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 can also develop serious complications like multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C)—a condition where different body parts become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, skin, eyes, or gastrointestinal organs.

COVID-19 Vaccines Are Safe for Children and Teens

Before recommending COVID-19 vaccination for children, scientists conducted clinical trials. The FDA gave the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine emergency authorization to use in children ages 5-15 years old and full approval to use in people ages 16 years and older. Learn more about the process of developing, authorizing, and approving COVID-19 vaccines.

COVID-19 vaccines are being monitored for safety with the most comprehensive and intense safety monitoring program in U.S. history. CDC monitors the safety of all COVID-19 vaccines after the vaccines are authorized or approved for use, including the risk of myocarditis in children ages 5 through 11 years.

- Your child may get a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines, including flu vaccine, at the same time.
- Your child may have some side effects, which are normal signs that their body is building protection. Most common side effects include pain, redness, and swelling at the injection site, tiredness, headache. Muscle pain. Chills, fever, and nausea.
- Serious health events after COVID-19 vaccination are rare.
- Cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the outer lining of the heart) have been reported after Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccination of children ages 12–17 years. These reactions are rare; in one study, the risk of myocarditis after the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech in the week following vaccination was around 54 cases per million doses administered to males ages 12–17 years.
- A severe allergic reaction, like anaphylaxis, may happen after any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines, but this is rare.
- Your child cannot get COVID-19 from any COVID-19 vaccine, including the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. Learn more about how mRNA vaccines, like the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines, work.

> **The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination outweigh the known and potential risks. Get a COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 years and older as soon as you can.**

Preparing Children and Teens for Vaccination

The experience of getting a COVID-19 vaccine will be very similar to the experience of getting routine vaccines. Use our tips to support your child before, during, and after routine vaccinations when they get a COVID-19 vaccine.

- Talk to your child before vaccination about what to expect.
- It is **not recommended** you give pain relievers before vaccination to try to prevent side effects.
- Tell the doctor or nurse about any allergies your child may have.

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- To prevent fainting and injuries related to fainting, your child should be seated or lying down during vaccination and for 15 minutes after the vaccine is given.
- After your child's COVID-19 vaccination, you will be asked to stay for 15–30 minutes so your child can be observed in case they have a severe allergic reaction and need immediate treatment.

Get Started with v-safe

Get started with **v-safe**, a free, easy-to-use, and confidential smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after your child receives a COVID-19 vaccination. Through v-safe, you can report how your child is feeling after getting vaccinated. **V-safe** also reminds you when to get your child's second dose. Learn more about **v-safe** and share this tool with other parents and caregivers to use after vaccination.

What to Expect after Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

Accessible version: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects.

Common side effects

On the arm where you got the shot:	Throughout the rest of your body:	
• Pain	• Tiredness	• Chills
• Redness	• Headache	• Fever
• Swelling	• Muscle pain	• Nausea

Helpful tips

If you have pain or discomfort after getting your vaccine, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

To reduce pain and discomfort where you got the shot:
- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area.
- Use or exercise your arm.

To reduce discomfort from fever:
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Dress lightly.

When to call the doctor

In most cases, discomfort from fever or pain is normal. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:
- If the redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours
- If your side effects are worrying you or do not seem to be going away after a few days

Remember

- Side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.
- With some COVID-19 vaccines, you will need 2 shots in order to get the most protection. You should get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first shot, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get it.
- You will only need 1 shot of the viral vector COVID-19 vaccine, Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until about two weeks after your second shot. For COVID-19 vaccines that require 1 shot, it takes about two weeks after vaccination for your body to build protection.
- After you are fully vaccinated, you may be able to start doing some things you had stopped doing because of the pandemic. Visit CDC's website for the latest recommendations. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines.

Ask your vaccination provider about getting started with v-safe

Use your smartphone to tell CDC about any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You'll also get reminders if you need a second dose

Learn more about **v-safe**.
www.cdc.gov/vsafe

HEALTHCARE PROVIDER, PLEASE FILL IN THE INFORMATION BELOW:

If your temperature is _____°F or _____°C or higher or if you have questions, call your healthcare provider.

Tell your healthcare provider about: _____

Healthcare provider phone number: _____

Medication (if needed):

Take _____ every _____ hours as needed.
   (type and dose or amount)

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cdc.gov/coronavirus

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