

# COVID-19: Pfizer vaccines for children ages 5-11



COVID-19 vaccines are authorized for emergency use in children ages 5-11.

## What are the benefits of vaccinating my child?

While most children are at lower risk for severe illness from COVID-19, there are still many unknown long-term effects. Vaccination also allows for a safer return to activities and normal life. Vaccination will:

- Help prevent the risk of serious illness including Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)
- Help prevent long-term effects of COVID-19
- Reduce the risk of passing COVID-19 infection to family members and others at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19

## Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe and effective in children?

Yes, COVID-19 vaccines approved for emergency use authorization (EUA) in the United States are safe. The vaccines go through the same testing and clinical trials as all vaccines and no serious safety concerns have been identified.

Clinical trials show COVID-19 vaccines are very effective in children ages 5-11, **preventing 90.7% of symptomatic infections**. In fact, data shows the immune response for children was very similar to that of trial participants ages 16-25, even with the lower dosage administered to children.

## Will kids have the same dose of the vaccines as adults?

For the Pfizer vaccine, children ages 5-11 will receive **one-third the dosage** of adults, provided in different packaging. Clinical trials showed that this dose, delivered in a **two-dose regimen, 21 days apart**, was safe and generated similar antibody levels as the full dose did for adults.

## What side effects are common in children?

- Pain, swelling, redness at the injection site
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Joint stiffness
- Swollen lymph nodes

## Are there long-term side effects?

Long-term side effects are unlikely, as clinical studies demonstrated safety for multiple months past the typical timeframe for vaccine reactions. Based on our knowledge of mRNA and the human body, we don't expect long-term side effects since it breaks down in the body in 72 hours.

## Should I worry the vaccine is too “new”?

No. As of October 2021, more than 6.63 billion doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been given worldwide, with more than 416 million doses in the United States. For adolescents alone, over 11 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine tell us that this vaccine is no longer “new.” Scientists and pediatricians feel confident in the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine. Waiting puts you at higher risk for infection and illness.

## Does the COVID-19 vaccine impact puberty or menstruation?

There is no clinical evidence to suggest COVID-19 vaccines have effects on puberty or fertility.

## My child had COVID. Do they need the vaccine?

Yes. We know that “natural immunity” can be high at first. However, protection can drop off quickly or change based on circulating variants. Getting a vaccine, even for those who have already had COVID-19, strengthens your immune response.

## Can kids become very sick with COVID?

Yes. COVID-19 disease in kids can range from no symptoms to severe illness.

- As of October 2021, over 6.3 million COVID-19 pediatric cases have been reported.
- 30% of hospitalizations for kids with COVID-19 had **no underlying medical conditions.**
- Long COVID, or lingering COVID-19 symptoms, can lead to learning problems, heart problems, exercise fatigue with sports, and respiratory issues. This has been reported in about 8% of children who have had COVID-19.
- **Since the pandemic began, over 600 pediatric deaths due to COVID-19 have been reported. It is now a top 10 cause of death for kids in the United States.**

## What are the ingredients of the vaccine?

Put simply, it’s fat (lipids), salt, electrolytes and sugar.

- Polyethylene glycol (PEG), the most famous lipid, is also the main ingredient in MiraLAX (which you know about if your child has ever been constipated).
- Salt, electrolytes and sugar help keep the vaccine stable and are natural preservatives.

