

WHAT TO KNOW AFTER RECEIVING A COVID-19 VACCINE FOR YOUNGER ADOLESCENTS

COVID-19 VACCINE
EDUCATION *and*
EQUITY PROJECT

What age groups are eligible for the vaccine?

- The FDA has approved three vaccines to prevent COVID-19 and has authorized them for emergency use in people 18 years of age and older in the United States. These vaccines include the two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, and the single-dose vaccine from Johnson & Johnson.
- The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has also been authorized for emergency use in children as young as 12.

Sources: [CDC - COVID-19 Vaccine for Preteens and Teens](#) (Updated 5/15/21)



How effective is the Pfizer vaccine for children 12-15?

- The Pfizer vaccine was 100% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 in the clinical trial for children ages 12-15. Clinical studies found that children's immune system response to the vaccine was similar to that of older teens and young adults and found no safety concerns with the vaccine in adolescents and teens.

Sources: [CDC - COVID-19 Vaccine for Preteens and Teens](#) (Updated 5/15/21)



Do kids 12-15 get the same dosage as adults?

- Yes, kids 12-15 receive the same vaccine and the same dosage as older teens and adults.
- The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is administered in two doses, given three weeks apart.

Source: [FDA - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: FDA Authorizes Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for Emergency Use in Adolescents in Another Important Action in Fight Against Pandemic](#) (Published 5/10/21)

What about younger children, is there a vaccine available for children under 12?

- No vaccine has been approved for use in younger children.
- Both Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna have clinical trials underway to determine the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines in children under the age of 12. Once the vaccines have been thoroughly tested, they may also be authorized for use in younger children.

Source: [Johns Hopkins Medicine - COVID-19 Vaccine: What Parents Need to Know](#) (Updated 5/13/21)

Are the vaccines safe?

- Yes. All approved COVID-19 vaccines 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.

Sources: [CDC - Covid-19 Vaccine for Preteens and Teens \(Updated 5/15/21\)](#) | [CDC - Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines \(Updated 5/11/21\)](#)

Is it safe to test the COVID-19 vaccine on children and teens?

- All COVID-19 vaccines have been developed, tested and used under the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history, including the studies in adolescents and children.

Sources: [CDC - Covid-19 Vaccine for Preteens and Teens \(Updated 5/15/21\)](#)



Why is it important to vaccinate kids when most have mild symptoms?

- There are about 17 million [adolescents](#) in the United States. Opening vaccination to this population strengthens efforts to protect even more people from the effects of COVID-19.
- COVID-19 vaccines both [help](#) protect kids from getting COVID-19, and help prevent them from getting very ill if they do get COVID-19.
- While compared to adults fewer children have been infected with COVID-19, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, get sick from COVID-19, and spread COVID-19 to others.
- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 1.5 million adolescents aged 12 – 17 have been diagnosed with COVID-19, with more than 13,000 hospitalizations.ⁱ
- Most children who become infected with the COVID-19 virus have only a mild illness, but in some rare instances, children have gone on to develop 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, it gets worse quickly and can be fatal.ⁱⁱ
- 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 means there is less of a chance for dangerous variants.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Widespread [vaccination](#) is a critical tool to help stop the pandemic and [vaccinating children](#) will be an important component of reaching herd immunity (when 70% to 85% of the population are vaccinated/immune to the virus).
- Once teens and adolescents are fully vaccinated, they can safely return to school and social activities and parents and caregivers can have more peace of mind knowing their family is protected.^{iv}

ⁱSources: [CDC - Covid-19 Vaccine for Preteens and Teens \(Updated 5/15/21\)](#) | [CDC: COVID Data Tracker \(Updated 5/15/21\)](#)

ⁱⁱ Source: [Mayo Clinic - Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children and COVID-19](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: [Johns Hopkins Medicine - COVID-19 Vaccine: What Parents Need to Know \(Updated 5/13/21\)](#)

^{iv} Sources: [CDC - CDC Director Statement on Use of COVID-19 Vaccine in Adolescents Age 12 and Older \(Published 5/12/21\)](#) | [CDC - COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens \(Updated 5/15/21\)](#) | [Dr. Sean O'Leary: vice chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases \(Updated 4/29/21\)](#)



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 second dose.

Sources: [CDC - Covid-19 Vaccine for Preteens and Teens](#) (Updated 5/15/21)

Will the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine give my child COVID-19?

- No. The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine does not contain SARS-CoV-2 virus and cannot give you COVID-19.

Are there any long-term impacts of the vaccine in younger adolescents?

- 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.

Source: [Cleveland Clinic- Next in Line: Kids Ages 12 – 15 Eligible for Pfizer's COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (Published 5/12/21)





Will vaccines be required for kids to return to school? What about playing sports?

- In the U.S., school vaccination requirements are established by each state not by the federal government.
- Once a vaccine is [approved](#), health authorities, including CDC, will recommend how and when children should get the vaccines. However, the [decision](#) to make vaccines mandatory for school return is made by the state government.
- Every state currently requires K-12 students to be vaccinated against certain diseases, although the requirements – including which shots are required and the reasons students can opt out – vary from one state to another.^v
- Vaccines, along with mask-wearing, social distancing and other precautions will help ensure children’s return to school, sports and other activities in the future.^{vi}
- As sports and other group activities start back up, it is still [crucial](#) to be cautious and adhere to pandemic safety guidelines.

^v Source: [Kristine Bowman: Professor of Law and Education Michigan State University](#) (Updated 5/12/21)

^{vi} Source: [COVID-19 Vaccine: What Parents Need to Know | Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)

Do vaccinated kids attending or working at camps this summer need to wear masks and practice social distancing?

- Staff and campers who are fully vaccinated do not need to wear masks at camp, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance, and at the discretion of camp operators. Although fully vaccinated persons do not need to wear masks, camps can be supportive of staff or campers who choose to continue to wear a mask.
- Physical distancing is not necessary for campers and staff who are fully vaccinated except as indicated in [CDC’s Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#).
- Camp programs with any campers or staff who are not fully vaccinated should layer multiple [prevention strategies](#) to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, and help protect the people who are not vaccinated, including all children under the age of 12. This can include promoting vaccination against COVID-19 for eligible staff, campers, and their family members, correctly and consistently using [well-fitted masks](#) that cover the nose and mouth, and [physical distancing](#), including cohorting (grouping children together to reduce potential exposures).

Source: [CDC -- Guidance for Operating Youth Camps](#) (Updated 5/28/21)