

# INFORMATION ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE FOR CHILDREN

## Overview: COVID-19 Vaccine for Children

- All children ages 5 to 17 can get both doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.
- Children should receive the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine three weeks after their first dose.
- The safety of the vaccine was studied in approximately 3,100 children ages 5 to 11 who received the vaccine, and no serious side effects have been found in the study that is still ongoing. The FDA and CDC have several systems in place to continuously monitor the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine.

## How to receive the COVID-19 vaccine

- The federal government offers the COVID-19 vaccine at no charge to everyone living in the United States, regardless of immigration status or health insurance.
- You can find where you can receive the COVID-19 vaccine for your child at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)
- Text your zip code to 438829 or call 1-800-232-0233 to find vaccination centers in your area in the United States.
- Check local media. They may have information on how to get an appointment to get vaccinated.

## After the vaccine

- Children are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.
- Children can resume activities they did before the pandemic. To reduce the risk of infection from the variants, wear a mask in public. Children can also travel. It is mandatory to wear a mask on airplanes, buses, or trains. If you start to have symptoms of COVID-19, you can get a screening test to prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.
- Children can continue to go to school and can safely participate in sports, games, and other group activities.

## Possible side effects from the vaccine

- Side effects commonly include injection site pain (arm pain), redness and swelling, fatigue, headache, muscle and/or joint pain, chills, fever, swollen lymph nodes, nausea, and decreased appetite.

- The FDA and CDC have identified a risk of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the tissue surrounding the heart) after vaccination with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, but this risk is rare.

## Children with existing health problems

- Current evidence suggests that children with medically complex conditions, genetic, neurological, or metabolic conditions, or congenital heart disease may be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and should therefore be vaccinated against COVID-19.

## Data to this date

- Of the population of children who are 5 to 11 years old, 614,961 have initiation of getting vaccinated in the last 14 days. 6,765,354 have one dose of the vaccine. 4,791,399 children have received both doses of the vaccine.
- Of the population of children who are 12 to 17 years old, 16,004,541 have one dose of the vaccine. 13,618,836 children in this population have received both doses.

## A Tool to Fight the Variant Omicron

- The CDC states that vaccines remain the best public health measure to protect people from COVID-19 because it leads to slow transmission and reduces the likelihood of new variants emerging. COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death.
- CDC recommends that everyone 5 years and older protect themselves from COVID-19 by getting fully vaccinated.
- Teens ages 12-15 can now get booster doses. The CDC recommends that teens ages 12 to 17 receive a booster dose 5 months after the initial series of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.
- Scientists are currently investigating Omicron, including how protected fully vaccinated people will be against infection, hospitalization, and death.

*(Information obtained from CDC and updated 1/4/22)*