

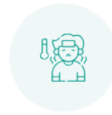
Facts for Parents and Caregivers

Why should children get the COVID-19 shot?



THE VACCINE IS SAFE AND EFFECTIVE

It will protect children from getting sick and getting others sick.



LONG TERM COMPLICATIONS

Children can develop long-term effects or even death from COVID-19. The COVID-19 shot helps reduce these risks.



VACCINATED CHILDREN PROTECT EVERYONE

Kids play a role in controlling the spread of COVID-19, so the more people vaccinated will help slow down infection rates, and there will be fewer chances for the virus to turn into a new strain.

When should children get the COVID-19 shot?

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recommends that the following children receive 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine:

- All children ages 6 through 23 months
- Children 2 to 17 years of age who have at least one underlying risk factor for developing severe COVID-19, have a weakened immune system and/or are in a special situation*
- Children 2 to 17 years of age without underlying risk factors if their parents or caregivers want to provide them with protection against COVID-19

Reach out to your child's doctor about scheduling your child's vaccination.

*Special situations include:

- Children who have never been vaccinated against COVID-19
- Residents of long-term care facilities or other group living places
- Infants and children who live with people who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness



What COVID-19 vaccines are available for children, and what is the recommended dosage?

IDPH recommends that:

- Children ages 6 months through 4 years receive the Moderna vaccine
- Children ages 5 through 11 years may receive the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech.
- Those who are 12 years and older receive the Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, or Novavax vaccine ([Source](#)).

Children aged 6 to 23 months may need multiple doses of COVID-19 vaccines to be up to date, depending on whether they completed the primary COVID-19 vaccine series.

Everyone aged 2 years and older should get 1 dose of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine to protect against serious illness from a COVID-19 infection.

Children who are moderately or severely immunocompromised will need to get multiple doses of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine.

Your child's health care provider can help determine how many doses of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine your child needs, how far apart the doses need to be taken, and what vaccine brand they are eligible for.

What are the possible symptoms after getting the COVID-19 shot?

Not everyone experiences symptoms after getting vaccinated. Your child may have some common side effects after getting the shot for about 24-48 hours, which are typical signs that the COVID-19 shot is working and that their body is building protection.

Side effects may include:

- Pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Fever and/or Nausea

Can children and teens receive regular childhood immunizations and the COVID-19 shot?

Yes, children and teens may get a COVID-19 shot and other vaccines, including the flu shot, at the same time. Talk to your child's doctor about any shots they may have missed over the past year and get caught up now.

What is the concern of the COVID-19 strains?

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 keeps changing over time. These changes can lead to new versions of the virus, also known as new strains. Researchers have evidence that:

- Some new strains may enable the coronavirus to spread faster from person to person.
- More infections can result in more people getting very sick or dying.
- New strains of the virus will continue to spread.
- The most significant risk of transmission is among communities with low vaccination rates.

Therefore, vaccines remain the most effective way to protect children from COVID-19 and new strains. For this reason, it is important that children get their updated COVID-19 vaccine each year.

Credible Resources:

- EverThrive IL
(<https://www.understand.EverThriveIL.org>)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
(<https://www.aap.org>)
- How to talk to kids about COVID-19
(<https://riseandshine.childrensnational.org/covid-19-faqs-for-kids/>)
- Long Covid Signs and Symptoms
(bit.ly/4nNgt9s)
- IDPH Immunization Recommendations for 2025-2026
Respiratory Virus Season
(bit.ly/47rOZ3n)

