

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 complications or even death from COVID-19.



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.



VACCINATED KIDS DON'T NEED TO QUARANTINE

Vaccinated kids exposed to COVID-19 don't need to quarantine and can keep going to school if they have no symptoms.



PROOF OF VACCINATION

Some places, including schools, may require proof of COVID-19 vaccination to attend events or play sports.



When should children get the COVID-19 shot?

It is recommended that all children 6 months and older receive their COVID-19 vaccines and boosters as soon as possible. Reach out to your health care provider or doctor about scheduling your child's vaccination.

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

The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are available for children 6 months and older as their primary series. If your child is 6 months and older and received Moderna as their primary series, they are eligible for the updated, or bivalent, booster shot. If your child is 5 years and older and has completed the series of either Pfizer or Moderna, they are also eligible for the bivalent booster. There is no booster recommendation for children aged 6 months to 4 years old who got the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine primary series.

What are booster shots, and who needs them?

A booster shot is an additional dose of a vaccine, and it is recommended for people who completed their original (or primary) vaccine series to have increased and longer protection. Everyone ages 12-17 can now get a COVID-19 booster shot.

What is the COVID-19 bivalent booster, and why do I need it?

The COVID-19 bivalent booster is an updated version of the current booster. The updated booster can protect against additional strains of COVID-19 that the original booster wasn't designed to fight.

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

Not everyone experiences symptoms after getting vaccinated. Your child may have some side effects after getting the shot for about 24-48 hours, which are typical signs 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 pediatrician 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 has gone through a changing process many times during the pandemic. 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 are the most effective way to control and treat the virus, including the new strains.

What to do if you test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive for the COVID-19 virus, you need to isolate for the recommended period of time to stop the spread of the virus to others. A few safety precautions are:

- Use a separate bathroom if possible.
- Do not share items like eating utensils, cups, or bedding with members of your household.
- Remain six feet apart, wash your hands, and wear a mask, especially around those who are unvaccinated or immunocompromised.

What are schools doing to protect your children from COVID-19?

Check with your school for procedures they have in place to help everyone safe.

Some questions you may want to ask are:

- What prevention strategies are you currently using to keep your child safe in school?
- How will you keep parents and caregivers updated on any changes in the school's prevention strategies?
- Will you offer COVID-19 vaccination at the school?
- Will you be providing screening testing regularly?



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/>)
- How to talk to teens about COVID-19
(<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-adolescents-and-youth>)
- Dealing with COVID-19 Anxiety?
(<https://www.psychology.org/resources/expert-tips-coronavirus-anxiety/>)

