



Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccines for Children

The United States [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) have recently approved and recommended the Pfizer and BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for [children aged 5 to 11](#).

The South Dakota Department of Health has put together this sheet to answer questions parents and guardians may have regarding the pediatric COVID-19 vaccination.

Who is eligible for the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine?

All children ages 5-11 are eligible to receive the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine. Children ages 12-17 are eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine authorized for adults.

What is the difference between the pediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and the adult Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine?

The pediatric vaccine (for ages 5-11) is the same vaccine as that for persons ages 12 and older, but at a lower dose. Both vaccines come in a two-dose series given three weeks apart.

Is the vaccine safe for children 5-11 years old?

Over 3,000 children have received the vaccine during clinical trials. The data collected during those trials proves that the vaccine is both [safe and effective](#). The most common side effects include headaches, fever, and chills in the two days post-vaccination.

How well does the vaccine work?

Clinical trials conducted on children ages 5-11 have shown 90.7% efficacy in fighting COVID-19. The vaccine produces a strong immune response in children which helps prevent serious illness from the virus.

Why should children get vaccinated for COVID-19?

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can help protect children ages 5 years and older from getting COVID-19 or its variants.

- Vaccinating children can help [protect family members](#), including siblings who are not eligible for vaccination and family members who may be at increased risk of getting very sick if they are infected.
- Vaccination can also help protect children from both short-term complications like hospitalization and [long-term health complications](#) due to COVID-19.
- Vaccinating children ages 5 years and older can help keep them in school and help them safely participate in sports, playdates, and other group activities.

Parents should talk with their child's pediatrician to get trusted, personalized medical advice and do what is right for their families.

