

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs

Is the vaccine safe for children?

Yes. The vaccines have been tested and reviewed by scientists to make sure they are safe and effective for children.

Will my child experience side effects after receiving the vaccine?

The most common side effects, if your child has any, are fatigue, headache and muscle pain. Fever or chills happen less often.

Does my child need a booster?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness at preventing infection or severe illness goes down over time. Boosters also help protect your child against new variants of COVID-19. Data shows that a booster increases the immune response, which improves protection against getting a serious COVID-19 infection.

What about the timing of boosters?

CDC says that people ages 5 years and older should get one updated (bivalent) booster if it has been at least two months since their last COVID-19 vaccine dose, whether that was:

- Their final primary series dose, or
- An original (monovalent) booster

People who have gotten more than one original (monovalent) booster are also recommended to get an updated (bivalent) booster.

Is there a fertility/development concern with vaccinating children before they reach puberty?

No. There is no evidence that any vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccines, can cause female or male fertility or development problems.

How is the vaccine for children different from the vaccine for adults?

The vaccines for children are given in a smaller dose than what is given to adolescents and adults.

If my child already had an infection with COVID-19, should they receive a vaccine?

Yes. Children with prior infection or disease with COVID-19 should receive a COVID-19 vaccination.

If my child had COVID, what is the timing of the next COVID-19 shot?

If your child recently had COVID-19, you may want to consider delaying their next vaccine (primary or booster) by three months from when your child's symptoms started, or if the child had no symptoms, from when they first received a positive test. This is to make sure your child gets the most benefit from the vaccine.

Is the Maine CDC worried about myocarditis or pericarditis after vaccination in children?

Cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the outer lining of the heart) have been reported after Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccination of children ages 12–17 years. These reactions are rare; in one study, the risk of myocarditis after the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech in the week following vaccination was around 54 cases per million doses administered to males ages 12–17 years. Of those who may have this side effect, the outcome for any individual child overall has been very good, with no suggested ongoing issues from the studies that are currently available.

Sources:

Evaluation of mRNA-1273 Vaccine in Children 6 months to 5 Years of Age. The New England Journal of Medicine, et al for the KIDCOVE Study Group, October 19, 2022. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2209367; Myocarditis after BNT162b2 Vaccination in Israeli Adolescents, The New England Journal of Medicine, October 19, 2022. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMC2207270; US Center for Disease Control and Prevention; Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html> Public FAQ | Covid-19 (maine.gov); https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fvaccines%2Frecommendations%2Fchildren-teens.html