

# FAQ COVID-19 Vaccine for Kids



(Updated June 2022)

## **What vaccines are available for children?**

The Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are authorized by the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for children ages 6 months and older. The approved dosage and frequency for each vaccine have shown to give the best immune response and protection for children.

## **How effective is the vaccine in children?**

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are very effective at creating strong antibodies to protect children from developing serious and long-term effects from COVID-19. These vaccines have reduced hospitalizations and serious disease in vaccinated children exposed to COVID-19, including protection from MIS-C (Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children) and long-term COVID symptoms. All children deserve this protection.

## **If children are less likely to get sick from COVID-19, why do they need a vaccine?**

The COVID-19 virus has caused serious illness in children and more than 130,000 pediatric hospitalizations in the US. Sadly it has become a leading cause of childhood death. Many children have developed long COVID with lingering symptoms of fatigue, chest pain, dizziness, body aches, and/or anxiety. We are still learning about the long-term effects of COVID-19 on children, such as increased risk of developing diabetes. Each exposure to COVID-19 puts a child at new risk for serious and long-term effects. Getting your child vaccinated is the best way to keep them safe.

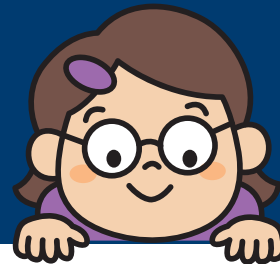
## **My child had COVID-19. Should they still get vaccinated?**

Yes. While a previous infection provides some immunity, it is unclear how much antibody protection people get and how long the protection lasts. Each time your child is exposed to the virus is a new risk that they can develop a serious illness. Some people have become seriously ill with COVID-19 more than once. If your child has had COVID-19, they will have better and longer-lasting protection after they are vaccinated.

## **Are there any children who should not get the vaccine?**

The likelihood of an allergic reaction is extremely rare and is treatable. Only children with a known allergy to one of the vaccine's components, mainly polyethylene glycol which is commonly used in medications, should not receive the vaccine. If you have any questions about your child's specific allergies, please speak to your child's pediatrician.

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## **Are there potential long-term side effects of the vaccine?**

No. There is no scientific evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine can cause long-term side effects.

Like all other vaccines that protect our children, the COVID-19 vaccine works by showing our immune system what the virus looks like. This is what allows our body's natural immunity to create strong antibodies to protect us when we are exposed to the virus. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccine particles, called messenger RNA, completely dissolve in our bodies within days after receiving the vaccine. The particles do not come in contact with or affect our DNA, there is no method for the vaccine to cause long-term effects on fertility, development, or any other part of our bodies.

## **What is myocarditis and can my child get that from the vaccine?**

A small number of adolescents and young adults have experienced a temporary inflammation of the heart called myocarditis. These cases are very rare and the symptoms completely resolve. Fortunately, the vaccine protects children from a much more severe type of myocarditis that they can get from COVID-19, in addition to protecting them from other serious complications of COVID-19 such as MIS-C, long COVID, hospitalization, and death.

## **Do children need a booster dose?**

A booster dose is recommended for all children ages 5 years and older after five months from their primary two-dose vaccine series. For immunocompromised patients, an extra primary dose and booster may be recommended. If your child is immunocompromised, talk with their pediatrician to make sure they are protected.