

Why Your Child Needs a COVID-19 Vaccine

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The Pfizer vaccine for COVID-19 is now available to anyone 12 years old and older. The vaccine protects children from COVID-19 and from spreading it to others. Even though COVID-19 illness and complications in children have been milder than in older adults, some children can get seriously ill from COVID-19.

Here is some information for you to know about COVID-19 vaccines for adolescents, from physicians in the Texas Medical Association's COVID-19 Outpatient Workgroup.



Vaccines Defend What Matters.
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- ✓ The long-term effect of COVID-19 infection in children is unknown. Research shows some children who have recovered from mild COVID-19 may have **long-term inflammation in the lungs and heart**. That's why it's important for your child to get the vaccine.
- ✓ Vaccines will help protect adolescents so they can **get back to school, sports, camps, and other social activities** they missed during the pandemic. They will not be protected fully until two weeks after their second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, so consider getting your child the first dose as soon as possible.
- ✓ When adolescents get sick from COVID-19, **even if their own symptoms are mild, they can spread infection to family members** who cannot be vaccinated because they are too young or have certain health conditions.
- ✓ Just like the Pfizer vaccine was tested for adults, it was monitored for **safety and effectiveness** in children aged 12 and older.
- ✓ Vaccines for adolescents are the **same ones currently available to adults**. Adolescents may have similar side effects as adults.
- ✓ Some teens may feel faint after receiving the vaccine. They can safely leave the vaccination clinic site following a 15-minute wait after they get their shot.
- ✓ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics recognize that vaccines **do not affect fertility, puberty, or menstruation**.
- ✓ Getting the COVID-19 vaccine along with any other routine vaccines for adolescents aged 12 and older is safe. If your child is behind on getting required vaccines such as HPV, meningococcal, and Tdap vaccines, now is a good time to catch up.
- ✓ COVID-19 vaccine and the associated visit are free for you and your child **if this is the only purpose of the visit**. Although you may need to show proof of insurance at the vaccination clinic, you should not be billed **for a shot-only visit**. If your child receives the shot as part of a well or sick visit, you will be charged for the visit but not for the vaccination.
- ✓ **Parental consent is required** for a child under age 18 to receive the vaccine. A parent does not have to be present at the time of vaccination if the clinic does not require it.

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RESOURCES

- 1 The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. "Post-COVID syndrome severely damages children's hearts: 'Immense inflammation' causing cardiac blood vessel dilation." *ScienceDaily*, Sept. 4, 2020. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/09/200904125111.htm
- 2 FDA, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Authorizes Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for Emergency Use in Adolescents in Another Important Action in Fight Against Pandemic, May 10, 2021. www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-emergency-use
- 3 Committee on Infectious Diseases. COVID-19 vaccines in children and adolescents. *Pediatrics*. 2021; doi: 10.1542/peds.2021-052336. <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2021/05/11/peds.2021-052336.full.pdf>

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