

FAQs for COVID-19 Vaccination for Children and Teens (6mo - 5yo)

On June 17, 2022, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) recommended emergency use authorization for COVID-19 vaccines for children beginning at age 6 months. The head of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has signed off on that recommendation, which makes the vaccine available for approximately 20 million US children under the age of 5 years old. The low-dose vaccines have begun shipping out and are expected to be available as early as Tuesday, June 21. Residents of Hidalgo County are advised to consult with their doctors about getting their children vaccinated. Vaccines are expected to be available at ALL Hidalgo County Public Health Clinics as early as Monday June 27th 2022.

“Many parents, caregivers and clinicians have been waiting for a vaccine for young children and this new vaccine roll-out will help protect children beginning at 6 months of age. Just as we have seen with older children and adults, the vaccines for infant children will protect them from the severe complications of COVID-19, such as the Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C), hospitalizations and death,” said Hidalgo County Health Department Chief Administrative Officer Eddie Olivarez. “For a few weeks now, we have been effectively securing doses so we can start offering vaccines for all children as young as six months old as soon as possible.”

What are the benefits of children 6 months and older getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

As per the CDC, “children who get COVID-19 can get very sick, can require treatment in a hospital, and in rare situations, can even die. After getting COVID-19, children and teens can also experience a wide range of new, returning, or ongoing health problems. Getting eligible children vaccinated can help prevent them from getting really sick even if they do get infected and help prevent serious short- and long-term complications of COVID-19.

Vaccinating children can also give parents greater confidence in their children participating in childcare, school, and other activities.

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer, more reliable way to build protection than getting sick with COVID-19. The known risks of COVID-19 and possible severe complications—such as long-term health problems, hospitalization, and even death—outweigh the potential risks of having a rare, adverse reaction to vaccination. The benefit of COVID-19 vaccines, like other vaccines, is that those who get vaccinated get protection without risking the potentially serious consequences of getting sick with COVID-19.”

What is the risk of children and teens getting COVID-19?

As per the CDC, “COVID-19 can make children and teens of any age very sick and sometimes requires treatment in a hospital. In rare situations, the complications from COVID-19 can lead to death. There is no way to tell in advance how children will be affected by COVID-19. Although children with underlying medical conditions are more likely to get severe COVID-19, healthy children without underlying conditions can also experience severe illness.

After getting COVID-19, children and teens can also experience a wide range of new, returning, or ongoing health problems. These post-COVID conditions can be physical or mental, last for weeks, and affect quality of life.”

If my child or teenager already got COVID-19, do they still need the vaccine?

As per the CDC, “people can get added protection by getting vaccinated after having been infected with COVID-19. So, even if a child has had COVID-19, they should still get vaccinated. For children who have been infected with COVID-19, their next dose can be delayed 3 months from when symptoms started or, if they did not have symptoms, when they received a positive test result.”

If my child is low risk of infection, should I wait to vaccinate them?

As per the CDC, “parents and caregivers should get their child vaccinated as soon as vaccines are available to them. Getting vaccinated provides the best protection against serious illness if a child gets infected with COVID-19. Since there is no way to tell in advance how children will be affected by COVID-19—and even healthy children can get really sick—it’s important to get them vaccinated as soon as possible to protect them against severe COVID-19.”

Is the COVID-19 safe for my child?

As per the CDC, “Yes. Before recommending COVID-19 vaccination for children, scientists conducted clinical trials with thousands of children to establish the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines.

Millions of children and teens ages 5 through 17 years have received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Ongoing safety monitoring shows that the known risks and possible severe complications of COVID-19 outweigh the potential risks of having a rare, adverse reaction to vaccination.

Will my child get symptoms after getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

As per the CDC, “reported side effects tend to be mild, temporary, and like those experienced after routine vaccination. Serious reactions after COVID-19 vaccination in children are rare. When they are reported, serious reactions most frequently occur within a few days after vaccination.”

Will my child get COVID-19 from getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

As per the CDC, “the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and Moderna vaccine, do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19 and do not interact with DNA in any way. mRNA vaccines teach the body how to fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Then, the body gets rid of the mRNA within a few days after vaccination.”

Will my child have fertility or developmental issues from receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

As per the CDC, “there is no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, can cause female or male fertility problems. There is no evidence that vaccine ingredients, including mRNA, or antibodies made following COVID-19 vaccination would cause any problems with becoming pregnant now or in the future. Similarly, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine affects puberty.”

Will my child develop myocarditis or pericarditis after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

As per the CDC, “rare cases of myocarditis and pericarditis have been reported after children and teens 5 years and older got a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. New studies have shown the rare risk of myocarditis and pericarditis associated with mRNA COVID-19 vaccination—mostly among males between the ages of 12 and 39 years—may be further reduced with a longer time between the first and second dose.”

Can my child get the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?

As per the CDC, “children and teens can get a COVID-19 vaccine and other routinely recommended vaccines, including a flu vaccine, at the same visit.”

Should my child get the COVID-19 booster?

As per the CDC, “everyone ages 5 years and older should get a COVID-19 booster, if eligible.

Children ages 12 years and older who have a weakened immune system should also get a 2nd booster, when eligible.”

What is the COVID-19 vaccine dosage for my child?

As per the CDC, “COVID-19 vaccine dosage is based on age on the day of vaccination, not on size or weight. Children receive a smaller, age-appropriate dose.”

Which COVID-19 vaccine should my 6 months – 4 year old child get? Pfizer or Moderna?

As per the CDC, “Both the Pfizer-BioNTech and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for children are safe and effective. Parents and caregivers should get their child vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine that is available to them.”

As a parent or caregiver, do I need to consent for my child to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

As per the CDC, “There is no federal legal requirement for a parent, guardian, or caregiver to consent for COVID-19 or any other vaccination. However, this does not mean that consent is not required for select age groups. State or local laws and policies, as well as vaccine provider policies, around minor consent for vaccination have existed for a long time and will also apply to COVID-19 vaccination of children.”

Is the COVID-19 vaccine free for my child?

As per the CDC, “COVID-19 vaccines are available for everyone 6 months and older at no cost. COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be given to all eligible people living in the United States, regardless of insurance or immigration status. While a vaccination site may ask to see your health insurance card, it is not required for your child to receive a vaccine.”

Will my child receive a vaccine card for their COVID-19 vaccination?

As per the CDC, “all vaccine recipients will receive a CDC COVID-19 vaccination card upon initial vaccination. Parents should take a photo of the card and then keep it in a safe place.”

Will my child get the same COVID-19 vaccine that adults get?

As per the CDC, “the COVID-19 vaccines for children have the same active ingredients as the vaccines given to adults. However, children receive a smaller, age-appropriate dose that is the right size for them. The smaller doses were rigorously tested and found to create the needed immune response for each age group. Your child should get the vaccine made for their age group.”