

# Give your child the power to fight COVID-19.



**Kids 5 to 11 are now eligible to receive the children's COVID-19 vaccine.**

**The Pfizer-BioNTech (age 5-11) COVID-19 vaccine is now authorized for use in children 5 to 11.** The vaccine is safe and effective in protecting kids against infection. It's been studied and tested through clinical trials — just like the adult vaccine. Your child will need two doses, 21 to 42 days apart, to become fully vaccinated against COVID-19. By becoming fully vaccinated, kids are protected from serious illness, and more. They can also get back to a school year uninterrupted by quarantines, play sports, participate in extracurricular activities, see their friends, travel, and more.

## **Q Where can children get the vaccine?**

Community vaccination centers, family health care providers, pediatrician's offices, school-based clinics, and retail pharmacies all offer the free COVID-19 vaccine. Visit [vaccinate.virginia.gov](https://vaccinate.virginia.gov) or call **(877) VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682)** to find a site near you. Customer service by phone is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern time. Parents, caregivers, and family members can also contact their children's health care provider to find an appointment.

## **Q When can children get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Starting now! The FDA has authorized, and the CDC has recommended, the vaccine for use in 5- to 11-year-olds. However, vaccine availability may vary by site, which could affect how soon children can get their first shot. Parents, caregivers, and family members of children 5 to 11 are encouraged to schedule appointments with their children's health care provider or any pharmacy or vaccination clinic offering the Pfizer-BioNTech (age 5–11) vaccine to ensure availability.

## **Q Is the kids' vaccine different from the vaccine for ages 12 and up?**

The kids' vaccine is specifically formulated for children and given at a lower dose than the vaccine meant for those over 12. The dose for 5- to 11-year-olds is just one-third the adult-size dose. It is important that children 5 to 11 receive the COVID-19 vaccine product indicated for their age group.

## **Q Given the low risk that COVID-19 poses for children, why not wait to vaccinate my child?**

The risk of children getting severely ill from COVID-19 is lower than in adults, but it is not zero.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children now account for as many as 1 in 4 COVID-19 infections. Children with COVID-19 are at risk of getting sick, becoming hospitalized, or in some cases, dying. Children may also develop long-term illness such as multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) or "long COVID."

Getting children fully vaccinated helps protect them from becoming seriously ill or developing long-term complications. Vaccination can also help reduce infection in families, schools, and our communities.

## Q If my child has already had a COVID-19 infection, do they still need to be vaccinated?

Yes. Even if your child has had an infection, they will benefit from vaccination. Compared with the natural immunity that results from previous infection, vaccination provides stronger and broader protection against the virus and its potential long-term effects.

## Q What side effects are common in children after vaccination?

Common side effects in children 5 to 11 after getting the shot are similar to those seen in adolescents and young adults.

On their arm where they get the shot, kids may experience:

- Pain or tenderness
- Redness
- Swelling

They might also experience:

- Tiredness
- Headache
- Body aches or muscle pain
- Chills
- Fever
- Nausea or diarrhea
- Swollen lymph nodes

Side effects mean that the shot is working. It's making the body's immune system create antibodies to fight the virus if a future exposure occurs. Side effects are typically mild and go away within a few days.

## Q Could the COVID-19 vaccine affect my child's growth or development?

No. There is no reason to believe that the COVID-19 vaccine available in the United States will affect your child's growth or development, including puberty, brain development, or fertility.

## Q What should I do if my child gets any of the common COVID-19 vaccine reactions?

Over-the-counter non-aspirin pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, can help reduce most side effects. These medications should only be taken after — not before — your child gets the shot. Please consult your child's health care provider before giving these medications.

Contact a health care provider if:

- Redness or tenderness where your child got the shot increases after 24 hours.
- Side effects are severe or persist beyond a few days.

Remember to enroll your child with v-safe, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's after vaccination health checker, at [vsafe.cdc.gov](https://vsafe.cdc.gov). You can report vaccination side effects to the CDC and receive reminders when it's time to get the second dose.