

# The COVID-19 vaccine for 5-11 year olds is now available.

Getting a vaccine can help protect your child from contracting COVID-19 and prevent them from spreading COVID-19 to others.

## Why do children need the COVID-19 vaccine?

- **Approximately 1/3 of children in this age group who are hospitalized with COVID-19 require ICU admission.**
  - Thousands of children in this age group have developed a severe long-term complication called multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). This can even occur after asymptomatic or mild COVID-19 infection resulting in inflammation of the heart, lungs, kidneys and other organs.
  - Post-COVID or “long COVID” conditions occur in children after both mild and severe infections. Fatigue, headache, loss of taste and smell, muscle or joint pain and trouble concentrating may last weeks or months after infection.
- **Children can spread COVID-19** to family members or classmates even if their symptoms are absent or mild. COVID-19 vaccination in children helps prevent the virus from spreading and helps protect those who are too young to be vaccinated or those who have certain health conditions.
- **Vaccines will help kids be kids.** Vaccines will help protect them as they learn in school, participate in sports, and engage in social activities with friends that they missed during the pandemic.

## Is the vaccine safe?

- The Pfizer vaccine was tested in children 5-11 years old, much like it was tested in adolescents and adults. The safety systems that monitor COVID-19 vaccines are the most robust in US history.
- Millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been safely given to adolescents 12-17 years of age. Rarely, COVID-19 vaccine may cause myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart. This myocarditis is mild,

temporary, and occurs much less frequently after vaccination than after COVID-19 disease.

- Myths about COVID-19 vaccine exist. Discuss your questions and concerns with a trusted healthcare provider. The American Academy of Pediatrics fully supports vaccination of children and adolescents.
- It is safe for children to receive the COVID-19 vaccine along with other routine childhood vaccines.

## Is the vaccine effective?

- The Pfizer vaccine was over 90% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 in 5-11 year olds. Research shows COVID-19 vaccines are effective, especially against serious illness and hospitalization.
- Real world research has shown that vaccination reduced the risk of COVID-19 hospitalization by 93% among adolescents ages 12-18 years.
- Optimal protection from vaccination occurs two weeks after the second dose, so please give your child’s first dose now.

## Is the vaccine different than the one given to adults?

- The Pfizer vaccine for adolescents 12 years and up is the same dose (30ug) currently administered to adults, while the vaccine for children 5-11 years is 1/3 of the dose (10ug) that adolescents and adults receive.
- Adolescents and children may have similar side effects to adults including fever, fatigue, headaches, chills, muscle and joint pain. Children may experience fever and chills less frequently than adolescents and adults.

For references, please visit

[www.texaschildrens.org/whychildrenneedthecovidvaccine](http://www.texaschildrens.org/whychildrenneedthecovidvaccine)

To schedule an appointment at a Texas Children’s Hospital location or community site, **please visit** [www.texaschildrens.org/covidscheduling](http://www.texaschildrens.org/covidscheduling) or scan the QR code.

