

COVID-19 Vaccine and Kids

Why does UW Health recommend that kids receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccination is the best tool we have available to reduce the harmful impact of COVID-19. Vaccines help prevent infection and serious illness from COVID-19 that could lead to hospitalization or death. The American Academy of Pediatrics and UW Health agree that children should receive the vaccine once eligible.

If kids are less likely to get severely ill from COVID-19, why do they need a vaccine?

While older adults are at a higher risk for serious disease, children can also get severely ill from COVID-19. Kids can also easily spread the illness to others who are high-risk and who could get very ill or die. The vaccine protects children and the people around them.

The vaccine and other safety measures help children safely attend school and participate in athletics and other activities, which are essential to children's mental and physical health.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for kids?

The Pfizer vaccine is proven safe for children age 5 and older. Children 5-11 years old are able to be protected with a lower dose than adults. This helps decrease side effects. Younger age groups are being studied and vaccines are likely to be approved for them in 2022.

What are the side effects of a COVID-19 vaccine?

Side effects are expected and tend to be more common after the second dose. Side effects are a sign that the immune system is building up protection to the disease.

Side effects may include:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Joint pain
- Headache

My child already had COVID-19, do they still need to receive a vaccine?

Yes. The level of protection from a COVID-19 infection varies and lessens over time. People can be infected with COVID-19 more than once. The vaccine protects much better and for much longer than the immune protection after infection.

Your child should wait to receive a vaccine until they are symptom-free and it has been at least 10 days since the start of their symptoms.

Will a vaccine protect my child against new strains (variants) of the virus?

Yes. Current vaccines do protect against new strains (variants). This protection is being closely monitored as new strains are found. The more people who get COVID-19, the more chances there are for the virus to mutate. To prevent new strains, it is important that as many people as possible receive a vaccine and booster once eligible.

After my child receives both COVID-19 vaccine doses, can they stop wearing a mask?

No. We must keep using all the tools we have to help end this pandemic. These include wearing a mask over your mouth and nose while indoors, frequent handwashing and staying at least 6 feet away from others.

Is there any reason to delay medical procedures or other vaccines when my child receives the COVID-19 vaccines?

COVID-19 vaccines can be given along with other vaccines. Do not delay any needed vaccines. Sometimes, patients are told not to schedule vaccines within 48 hours of certain procedures. This is to avoid confusing side effects of a vaccine with complications of the procedure.

Where can I learn more about COVID-19 vaccines?

If you have questions about vaccines, contact your child's health care provider. You can also scan the QR code to visit our website for answers to frequently asked questions about COVID-19 vaccines.



<https://coronavirus.uwhealth.org/covid-19-vaccine-and-kids/>

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 12/2021 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#8228.