COVID-19 Vaccines for Children Ages 5-11

Things to Know About Vaccine Safety & Access

The COVID-19 vaccine is now available to kids 5 years old and up. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all children 5 years old and up, as well as teenagers, should be vaccinated. The COVID-19 vaccine is available free of cost from doctors' offices, community health clinics, some schools, pharmacies and other community locations.

1. Is the COVID-19 Vaccine Safe for My Child?

The COVID-19 vaccine works by teaching the immune system to recognize and make antibodies that fight the virus. Before recommending COVID-19 vaccines for children, scientists conducted clinical trials to determine whether the vaccine works and is safe for people to use. The clinical trials found that the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine was more than 90 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 infections in children ages 5 through 11. Learn more about the process of developing, authorizing and approving COVID-19 vaccines. Explore more answers to some common questions about the science behind the COVID-19 vaccine.

2. What are the Side Effects of the COVID-19 Vaccine for Children?

Your child may have some mild and moderate short-term side effects, including pain, redness, swelling on the arm where they get the shot, chills, headache and fever through the rest of the body. These are normal signs that show your child's body is building protection. These side effects should go away in a day or so on their own. Some children may have no side effects. During clinical studies, children 5 to 11 years old had short-term side effects less often than older youth and adults. Serious side effects are rare.

3. Do I Need Health Insurance to Vaccinate My Child?

COVID-19 vaccines are free regardless of your or your child's health insurance and immigration status. A government ID or social security number may be requested at the time of your child's appointment, but they are not required to receive the vaccine.

4. Where Can I Vaccinate My Child?

You can visit myturn.ca.gov to make a COVID-19 vaccine appointment for your child, or visit www.vaccines.gov to find a convenient COVID-19 vaccine location. For more information or to get help making an appointment, you can also check with a doctor, community health worker or community health clinic. Because of high demand, it may take a few days or longer to get an appointment. Remember, your child will not be fully protected from COVID-19 infection until two weeks after they get their second dose of

5. How Do I Prepare for My Child's COVID-19 Vaccine Visit?

Prepare ahead of time for your child's COVID-19 vaccine visit by talking with them about what to expect, and using these tips to help make it a positive and calm experience. Make sure to tell the doctor or nurse about any allergies your child may have. After your child receives their first vaccine dose, don't forget to schedule an appointment for their second dose. Remember to store your child's paper vaccination record card in a safe place and make sure their pediatrician has a copy as well. Check out AAP's COVID-19 vaccine checklist for kids ages 5 years and up for more information.

Still have questions? Check the following sites for up to date information: www.covid19.ca.gov, www.cdc.gov/coronavirus, and www.publications.aap.org. You can also call the CA COVID-19 Hotline at 1-833-422-4255.