



Healthy Kids, Less Worry!



Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Why should my child get vaccinated against COVID-19?

COVID-19 vaccination can help protect your child from getting COVID-19. Although fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 compared to adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, can get sick from COVID-19, and can spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to others. Getting your child vaccinated helps to protect your child and your family.

Vaccination is now recommended for everyone 5 years and older. Currently, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is the only one available to children 5 years and older.

If kids don't get as sick as adults with COVID-19, why do they need to get the vaccine?

It's true, most children infected with COVID-19 have mild or no symptoms. But, some children become severely ill. It's hard to predict which kids who get COVID-19 will get severe symptoms, may need to be hospitalized, or on the rare occasion, die from the infection.

One thing we do know, the CDC says 30 percent of kids hospitalized with COVID-19 had no underlying health conditions that would have put them at increased risk. Another rare symptom is multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C), a condition linked to COVID-19 that can lead to admission in the ICU. The CDC also reports Black, Native American and Hispanic children were three times more likely to be hospitalized than white children.

Research suggests children with mild and severe COVID-19 infections have experienced long-term symptoms that can impact their performance in school and other normal activities. The most common include:

- Being tired
- Headache
- Trouble sleeping
- Trouble concentrating
- Muscle and joint pain
- Cough

Another concern is that children with COVID-19 and no symptoms can still spread the virus to others. Aside from preventing spreading of the disease, vaccines can also prevent disruptions in kids' school and activities. [Learn more here.](#)

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe for my child?

COVID-19 vaccines have been used under the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history, including studies in children 5 years and older. Your child cannot get COVID-19 from any COVID-19 vaccine. Like adults, children may have some side effects after COVID-19 vaccination. These side effects may affect their ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a couple of days.

How new is the mRNA technology?

While the COVID-19 virus is new, the technology behind the vaccines is decades old. mRNA was discovered in the 1960s and has been studied for vaccines since the 1970s. The COVID-19 vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history. The vaccines met the FDA's rigorous standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality. It is also important to note that vaccines rarely cause long-term effects.

What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine for children?

Some side effects, **which are normal signs that their body is building protection**, include:

- Pain, redness, swelling in the arm where your child got the shot
- Tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever or nausea

Should I be concerned about potential side effects from the vaccine?

Children ages 5 – 11 years old are given a third of the dose of adults. This lower dose was chosen to minimize potential side effects while still prompting a strong immune response. As with adults, it's normal to have some mild side effects to vaccines. This means your body is making antibodies – building its army to fight should you encounter the actual virus. The most common side effects were pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache and muscle aches that might last a couple days.

Parents are also concerned about the relatively rare side effect of myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart muscle. The CDC says risk of myocarditis from getting sick with COVID is much greater than from the vaccine.

Can my 5 – 11 aged child get a shot today?

Yes, the vaccine is being offered by pediatricians, local pharmacies and health departments across the state. Information about vaccine locations and scheduling is available at [vaccine.gov](https://www.vaccine.gov).

Can my child get their flu and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time?

Yes, your child can receive the COVID-19 vaccine with flu and other recommended childhood vaccinations.

Can my child attend school the same day they get the COVID vaccine?

Yes, your child may attend school the same day he/she receives the vaccine.

Are there risks to just a “wait and see” approach?

It's tempting to take a “wait and see” approach to getting your kids vaccinated from COVID-19, but doctors say this is not a time to delay. That's especially true for children who have other issues that may put them at higher risk for severe disease. These include obesity, chronic respiratory conditions, such as asthma or allergies, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

As children can spread COVID-19 to others, it's important for families with babies, grandparents, or other vulnerable family members get eligible children vaccinated to help stop the spread and protect those at risk. This is especially true this holiday season with indoor family gatherings.

Pediatricians say it's still beneficial for children who've had COVID-19 to get the vaccine.

Can the COVID-19 vaccine effect my child's future fertility?

There is currently no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines, antibodies created following vaccination, nor the vaccines ingredients cause any problems with becoming pregnant now or in the future. Many women have become pregnant after receiving the vaccine and during pregnancy. The vaccine does not cross into the placenta, and quickly leaves the body. However, the mother's antibodies created from the vaccine do provide the baby with some level of protection. There is also no evidence the COVID-19 vaccines cause fertility problems in men. [Read more from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.](#)

How can I best prepare my child for the vaccine?

Getting a shot may cause fear and anxiety in your child. Talking with your child about what is going to happen and why it's so important to get the COVID-19 vaccine can help relieve the stress. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Be calm – kids pick up on how the adults around them are feeling
- Help them understand the importance – protecting themselves and others
- No more quarantining – if exposed, vaccinated people don't have to quarantine – can keep going to school, participate in sports, clubs, etc.
- Consider a reward or special activity after the shots for "being brave."

You'll also want to have your Parent Game Plan in place. Consider the following:

- Where will you get your child immunized? Your pediatrician's office, school, pharmacy?
- Look at your child's schedule, can you go the day before a break in activities just in case they have a reaction?
- Keeping your child well-hydrated will help them recover.

[Learn more from the Kentucky Department of Public Health.](#)

[Learn more from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.](#)