



## COVID-19 Vaccines and Children Age 5 to 11 Information for Parents, Guardians & Caregivers

Getting vaccinated is a safe and effective way to reduce the risk of getting, spreading and becoming seriously sick from COVID-19. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are encouraged to get their 5-11 year olds vaccinated as soon as a COVID-19 vaccine is available.

- All Health Canada approved vaccines meet high standards for safety, effectiveness and quality.
- There will be enough vaccine to vaccinate all 5 to 11 year olds in Toronto.
- The Pfizer BioNTech vaccine for children age 5 to 11 years old is similar to the adult vaccine, but the dose is lower (10 mcg versus 30 mcg).

### RISKS OF COVID-19 IN CHILDREN

- COVID-19 rates in Toronto are currently highest in children ages 4 to 11.
- While children who get COVID-19 usually experience mild or no symptoms, some may have serious symptoms and need to go to the hospital, even if they have no other health issues.
- Children can develop long COVID. This is when a person recovers from COVID-19 but continues to have symptoms for a long time, such as a shortness of breath, difficulty concentrating and tiredness.
- Rarely, children can get a serious inflammatory condition weeks after even a mild COVID-19 infection; it can affect many of their organs.

### THE BENEFITS OF VACCINATING YOUR CHILD FOR COVID-19

- The COVID-19 vaccine will reduce the risk of children getting and spreading COVID-19.
- Vaccination will support children's mental health by making it safer for them to stay connected with others face-to-face.
- By getting vaccinated, children will be able to more safely get back to the activities they enjoy, including continued in-person learning, sports and other activities.

### VACCINE SAFETY

- [Clinical trial](#) data shows that the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years old is safe and effective, including, children with health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, allergies or a weak immune system.
- The vaccine does not contain the COVID-19 virus, so your child cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine.
  - The vaccine teaches the immune system how to make antibodies that protect against the COVID-19 virus.
  - After vaccination, you child's immune system will be able to recognize and fight the real virus if exposed.



## VACCINE SIDE EFFECTS

- In the [clinical trial](#), vaccine side effects in children were mild, similar to those for adults (sore arm, headache, tiredness), and usually went away in 1-3 days.
- Rare cases of myocarditis and pericarditis (heart inflammation) in youth and young adults have been reported after getting the COVID-19 mRNA vaccine.
  - To date, there have been no cases of myocarditis/pericarditis in vaccine clinical trials with 5 to 11 year olds. This will be monitored closely.
  - The risk of myocarditis and pericarditis is much greater if a child gets COVID-19. Most who get it following vaccination have a mild illness and fully recover in days.
- There is no evidence that any vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccines, cause infertility (problems trying to get pregnant) or long-term menstrual irregularities (changes in your period or menstrual cycle).

## STEPS TO TAKE NOW

- To best protect your family, everyone who is [eligible](#) should get [fully vaccinated](#).
- Talk to your child to prepare them for the vaccine. See: [How to Talk to Kids about Getting Vaccinated](#).
- Talk to a healthcare provider to get your or your child's questions answered about the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Stay informed and only get information from credible sources. Updates about vaccines for children age 5 to 11 will be available on the Toronto Public Health [website](#).

## RESOURCES AND REFERRALS FOR CONSULTATION AND VACCINATION OF CHILDREN

- [Sick Kids COVID-19 Consult Service](#)
- Provincial Vaccine Confidence Centre - [1-833-943-3900](#)
- [SHN VaxFacts Clinic](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine for children and youth | Caring for kids](#)
- [Max the Vax – Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies](#)