

FAQs on COVID-19 vaccines for children 6 months to 5 years

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Why should children 6 months and older get vaccinated against COVID-19?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending vaccination against COVID-19 for everyone 6 months of age and older. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) also recommends vaccination for children ages 6 months and older. According to the CDC, children who get COVID-19 can get very sick, can require treatment in a hospital, and in rare situations, can even die. After getting COVID-19, children and teens can also experience a wide range of new, returning, or ongoing health problems. Getting eligible children vaccinated can help prevent them from getting sick even if they do get infected and help prevent serious short- and long-term complications of COVID-19. Vaccinating children can also give parents greater confidence in their children participating in childcare, school, and other activities.

(Source: [CDC](#) and [AAP](#))

Which COVID vaccines are now authorized for children 6 months to 5 years?

The Moderna vaccine is authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be administered to children ages 6 months to 5 years of age in two doses given one month apart. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine – which was already approved for everyone 5 years and older -- is authorized by the FDA to be administered to children 6 months to 4 years of age in three doses, with the initial two doses given three weeks apart followed by a third dose given at least eight weeks after the second dose.

(Source: [FDA](#))

Are the doses for younger children the same as the adult doses?

No, the doses for younger children are smaller. The Moderna vaccine dose for children 6 months to 5 years of age is one-quarter of the adult dose. The Pfizer vaccine for children 6 months to 4 years of age is one-tenth the amount of the adult dose.

(Source: [Moderna](#) and [Pfizer](#) FDA health care provider fact sheets)

How effective are the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for younger children?

The primary objective for the Moderna and Pfizer clinical trials for children ages 6 months to 5 years was to measure whether the vaccines prompted an immune response in these younger children similar to that observed in teens and young adults, which they did.

The clinical trials for different age groups within the 6 months to 5 years age range were performed at different stages of the pandemic, when different COVID-19 variants were active and effectiveness against symptomatic infection was variable, so it is not possible to accurately compare the effectiveness of the two vaccines in this age group or to the effectiveness of vaccines whose clinical trials were conducted much earlier in the pandemic. *(Source: [FDA](#))*

What were the side effects experienced by participants in the clinical trials?

The most commonly reported side effects for children 6 months to 5 years included pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, fever and underarm (or groin) swelling/tenderness of lymph nodes in the same arm (or thigh) as the injection. In clinical trial participants 6 through 36 months of age, the most commonly reported side effects also included irritability/crying, sleepiness, and loss of appetite. Most participants experienced either mild to moderate side effects or no side effects.

(Source: [FDA](#))

How should a parent decide which vaccine their child should receive?

According to the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics, parents should have their children ages 6 months to 5 years vaccinated with the vaccine that is most readily available in their area. More detailed information about the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for younger children can also be found on the [FDA](#) and [CDC](#) websites.

(Sources: [Moderna](#) and [Pfizer](#) recipient fact sheets and [AAP FAQ](#))

Does Maui Health offer both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for younger children?

For this age group (6 months – 5 years old), Maui Health currently offers both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, based on available supply. Child must receive the same vaccine for all doses in primary series. Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Can my child be vaccinated if he or she has already had COVID-19?

Yes. According to the CDC, emerging evidence indicates that people can get added protection by getting vaccinated after having been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. Even if a child has had COVID-19, they should still get vaccinated. For children who have been infected with COVID-19, their next dose can be delayed 3 months from when symptoms started or, if they did not have symptoms, when they received a positive test.

(Source: [CDC](#))