

# COVID-19 Vaccine: What Parents Need to Know

The COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine that is approved for use in adults is now approved for use in children 12 and older.

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## Why should my child get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Getting yourself and your child vaccinated are important steps in protecting against infection and our return to normalcy. Having your child vaccinated can help:

- Protect your child from severe COVID-19.
- Protect loved ones by stopping the spread of the virus.
- Return to traditional in-person school, sports and other extracurricular activities.
- Eliminate mask wearing requirements.
- Reach herd immunity (herd immunity is when a large portion of a community becomes immune to a disease, either through vaccination or by having had the disease). Once enough of our population is immunized, the virus will have trouble spreading. The shots we get as babies work in the same way. Vaccines keep measles, polio and other diseases under control.

## Here are a few myths you may have heard related to kids, COVID-19 and the vaccine.

### Myth #1: Kids can't get COVID-19.

**FALSE.** Your child may not get as sick as an adult with COVID-19, and may even show no symptoms at all, but they can still get it. Some kids have had severe illness and, in rare cases, have died. Even if your child gets COVID-19 and has no symptoms, they can still pass it on to family, friends, teachers, coaches and others around them.

### Myth #2: The vaccine will give my child COVID-19.

**FALSE.** You can't get COVID-19 from the vaccine. Your child may exhibit side effects from the vaccine, like body aches, fatigue and headache. These side effects are because their body is doing what it's supposed to, however, which is building immunity to fight off the virus. When side effects do occur, they typically only last one to two days.

### Myth #3: The COVID-19 vaccine can cause infertility or low sperm counts in my child.

**FALSE.** There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine affects pregnancy or causes future fertility problems or a low sperm count. Many people are still getting pregnant and having healthy babies after receiving the vaccine.

### Myth #4: My child will test positive for SARS CoV-2, the virus causing COVID-19, after receiving the vaccine.

**FALSE.** The vaccine does not cause a positive test. Once your child develops an immune response, which is the goal of the vaccine, they should test positive for antibodies. A positive antibody test shows that your child either had COVID-19 previously (even if you weren't aware of it) or that they are responding to the vaccine and now are protected against it.

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**Myth #5: My child doesn't need to be vaccinated if they had COVID-19.**

**FALSE.** We don't yet know how long antibodies remain in the body and protect us from the virus. Also, it's possible to get COVID-19 again, so it's important for your child to get vaccinated. If your child had COVID-19 and was treated with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, they need to wait 90 days before getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Check with your physician about what treatment they received.

**Myth #6: If my child is healthy and has no underlying conditions, they can skip the vaccine.**

**FALSE.** Getting vaccinated is much safer than risking infection because COVID-19 affects everyone differently and there is no way to predict how sick your child could get. Very healthy people have become extremely ill while people with lots of chronic health conditions have had no symptoms at all.

**Myth #7: The COVID-19 vaccine will alter my child's DNA.**

**FALSE.** Your child's DNA will not change after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. The two vaccine varieties currently being used – messenger RNA (mRNA) and viral vector – aren't structured to affect DNA. Vaccines teach our bodies how to naturally defend us from germs by causing an immune response.

**Myth #8: Getting the vaccine might not keep my child from getting sick with COVID-19.**

**TRUE.** While no vaccine is 100% effective, the COVID-19 vaccine has proven to be extremely effective in preventing both mild and severe infection in those fully vaccinated.

Learn more at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

To schedule an appointment to get the COVID-19 vaccine for you and/or your child or to learn more about COVID-19 vaccine walk-in availability, visit [NationwideChildrens.org/Vaccine](https://www.NationwideChildrens.org/Vaccine).



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