



What You Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines for Kids

1. COVID-19 vaccines **teach our bodies how to fight off COVID-19** without actually making us sick.

COVID-19 vaccines give our bodies a sneak peek at how the COVID-19 virus works so that our immune system can recognize it and fight it off. They teach our bodies to make disease-specific proteins called antibodies to protect us. COVID-19 vaccines don't give us COVID-19.

2. Studies show COVID-19 vaccines are **safe and effective for kids ages 12-15.**

All COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States went through clinical trials and were approved for emergency use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. They have all been recommended by medical and public health experts nationally and here in Vermont.

Clinical trials of the Pfizer vaccine among kids ages 12-15 showed that the vaccine is safe and effective for that age group. None of the children who got the Pfizer vaccine during the clinical trial got sick with COVID-19.

Clinical trials of the Pfizer vaccine among children as young as 6 months old are starting now, and more information will be available soon.

3. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 has **big benefits for Vermont kids.**

As of May 2021, more than 4,000 Vermont kids have tested positive for COVID-19 since the pandemic began, and that has had a huge impact on our kids, families, child care programs and schools. Getting our kids vaccinated will keep them safe and healthy and will help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

Getting vaccinated also means more freedom so Vermont kids can be kids. They can see their other vaccinated friends without worry, travel to visit family outside Vermont, and skip the need to quarantine if they are ever found to be a close contact to someone with COVID-19.

4. COVID-19 vaccines were developed after **decades of research.**

While the COVID-19 virus itself is relatively new, scientists have been studying these types of viruses, known as coronaviruses, for decades. When COVID-19 was identified, researchers all over the world were focused on one goal – getting rid of this new coronavirus. This global effort, combined with large amounts of funding all over the world, helped us get to the finish line with safe and effective vaccines.

5. Kids ages 12-15 tend to have the **same side effects** as other age groups.

Children ages 12-15 have similar side effects as young adults. The most common side effects are:

- Pain in the arm where the vaccine was given
- Fever
- Chills
- Tiredness

Side effects from COVID-19 vaccines are normal signs that your body is building up protection against COVID-19. Some side effects can impact daily activities but should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects at all.

A few people have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine, but this is very rare. To be on the safe side, everyone who gets a COVID-19 vaccine is asked to stay at the clinic for a short period of time (usually 15 minutes) so they can be monitored for any concerning reactions.

6. You can **help your kids feel ready** to get their COVID-19 vaccine.

Parents can play a big role in helping kids feel ready for any vaccine. You can talk to them about what to expect when they get the vaccine, and what might happen in the days after. They might feel a little sick for a day or two after getting their vaccine, but it won't last long.

Talk them through how the vaccine will teach their body to fight off the COVID-19 virus, and how by getting vaccinated they are helping to protect everyone around them.

More information for parents:

- Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine (Vermont Department of Health):
www.healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine
- The Science Behind the COVID-19 Vaccine: Parent FAQs (American Academy of Pediatrics):
www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/The-Science-Behind-the-COVID-19-Vaccine-Parent-FAQs.aspx
- Understanding How COVID-19 Vaccines Work (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention):
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/how-they-work.html