



COVID-19 Vaccination for Children and Teens with Disabilities

What You Need to Know

- COVID-19 vaccination for children and teens is safe and effective. Everyone 5 years and older, including those with disabilities and underlying medical conditions,

Children and youth with special healthcare needs require more care for their physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional differences than their typically developing peers. A special healthcare need can include physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, as well as long-standing medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, a blood disorder, or muscular dystrophy.

1 in 6 children ages 3 through 17 years of age has **one or more developmental disabilities**.

Children and Teens with Disabilities Are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19

Many children and teens with disabilities have underlying medical conditions such as lung, heart, or kidney disease, a weakened immune system, cancer, obesity, diabetes, some blood diseases, or conditions of the muscular or central nervous system. Children and teens with one or more underlying medical condition are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Similarly, children and teens with developmental disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, an intellectual disability, or autism, may be more likely to experience mental health conditions from social isolation. They can also experience barriers to getting needed health care and other support, and can have other characteristics that increase their risk of COVID-19, including:

- Limited mobility
 - Need for important support services
 - Challenges practicing preventive measures, such as wearing a mask
- Challenges communicating symptoms of illness or being sick

Getting Children and Teens with Disabilities Vaccinated against COVID-19

The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination outweigh the known and potential risks

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines for those ages 5 through 17 years have been shown to be safe and effective at protecting against COVID-19 and preventing severe illness if infected.

- In clinical trials, about 20% of children and teens who participated had an underlying medical condition.

Some children and teens ages 5 through 17 years with a weakened immune system should get an additional dose of vaccine as part of their primary COVID-19 vaccination series.

Prepare all children and teens for the vaccination visit and use resources such as picture stories for support during and after vaccination.

After vaccination, parents and caregivers should continue following all current prevention measures recommended by CDC.

Requesting accommodations at COVID-19 vaccination sites

When making an appointment or arriving for vaccination, parents and caregivers can let staff and/or volunteers know your child might need some accommodations.

COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations for Children and Teens

- CDC recommends **everyone ages 5 years and older** get vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Everyone ages 12 years and older should also get a COVID-19 booster shot.

Currently, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is the only vaccine authorized or approved for children ages 5 through 17 years. Children and teens need two doses of a Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. Everyone ages 12 years and older should also get a booster shot.

Children Ages 5-11 Years Who Are Moderately or Severely Immunocompromised

Children ages 5 through 11 years who are moderately or severely immunocompromised **should receive a primary series of 3 doses** of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on the schedule shown below to stay up to date. A booster is not recommended for this age group at this time.

Pre-teens and Teens Who Are Moderately or Severely Immunocompromised

People ages 12 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised **should receive a total of 4 doses** of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine to stay up to date. The 4 doses include a primary series of 3 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, plus 1 booster of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (4th dose), given on the schedule shown below. Note only Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is available for teens ages 12–17 years.

For additional assistance please contact the Family Voices of ND office at 888-522-9654

