

Pediatric COVID-19 vaccine: 6 months through 5 years

Children from 6 months through 5 years of age are now eligible to receive the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines to better protect them from COVID-19. All children, including those who have already had COVID-19, should get vaccinated.

Vaccines are available in many of the same places that were available for adult and adolescent doses.

- Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health is providing vaccine clinics. To schedule your child's appointment, visit ldhealth.org/getmyvaccine and enter the registration code. For help, call 785-843-0721.
- LMH Health will offer pediatric COVID vaccines for established patients at our family practice clinics beginning July 7.

Pediatric COVID vaccines are also available at other primary care providers and local pharmacies. A complete list is available at vaccinefinder.org/search.

Q: How many doses of the vaccine will my child receive?

A: The two vaccines available for children 6 months to 5 years old have different schedules for shots. The Moderna vaccine will be given in two doses one month apart. The Pfizer vaccine is administered in three doses over a three-month period.

Q: Is it safe to give children a new vaccine?

A: Millions of people in the U.S. have received COVID-19 vaccines. The mRNA technology used in COVID-19 vaccines has been studied for about 15 years. mRNA molecules occur naturally in humans and the vaccine molecules are destroyed and don't stay in the body. This means they're safe for growing bodies and there is no evidence of an impact on puberty or fertility.

Q: Will my child be receiving a live vaccine?

A: No. The vaccine doesn't introduce a live COVID virus to the body. It helps trigger the immune response within the body and teaches cells to recognize the COVID-19 virus. When the immune system responds, it starts to produce antibodies in the way that it would with a natural infection.

Q: If my child already had COVID, should they still get the vaccine?

A: Yes! While there is some immunity following a COVID infection, it won't last as long and won't be as strong as the immunity generated by the vaccine.

Q: Are the side effects from the vaccine different in children than in adolescents?

A: According to the FDA, the side effects in children are comparable to those in adolescents. These include pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache, chills, muscle pain, fever and joint pain. If they occur, side effects usually subside in one to three days.

Q: I've still got questions about the vaccine and its safety. Who can I talk with about my concerns?

A: Your child's primary care physician, pediatrician or trusted healthcare provider can answer your questions. Pharmacists at LMH Health and local pharmacies are also available.