



WAYNE MEMORIAL
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTERS
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COVID Vaccine for 5 – 11 year olds

Now that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for children between the ages of 5 and 17, we know as a parent or guardian you have questions.

Why should I vaccinate my child against COVID-19?

Once a child is fully vaccinated there is a decreased chance of contracting COVID-19. If they do catch the virus they will likely not become as sick and have a decreased risk for hospitalization. While COVID-19 infection is usually mild in children, it has increased in frequency and severity in children with the Delta variant. Over 650 children have died from COVID-19 in the past year and a half and 22,000 have been hospitalized. At least 5,200 children have been affected by MIS-C, a syndrome of severe diffuse inflammation that affects multiple organs and can be fatal. The rates are higher than any other infectious disease we currently vaccinate children for. Additionally, by having your child vaccinated, you can protect family members they come in contact with.

How do we know the vaccine is safe for children so young?

Tens of thousands of volunteers were involved in clinical trials for the vaccines. The clinical trials showed that the COVID-19 vaccines are remarkably safe and effective. More than 11 million children in the U.S. between the ages of 12 to 17 years old have already been fully vaccinated. The CDC says that COVID-19 vaccines will have "the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history."

How does the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine work?

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine works similarly to other vaccines your child has received. Germs such as SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, invade and multiply inside the body. The vaccine helps stop this by teaching the immune system to recognize and make antibodies to fight the virus. It does this by using messenger RNA (mRNA), a molecule that converts information in genes into a blueprint for making proteins. mRNA does not contain a live virus, and it does not enter the nucleus of a cell or alter DNA.

What are the most common side effects?

Common side effects include: pain, redness or swelling at the injection site. Tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and nausea may also occur. Although side effects may affect a child's ability to do daily activities, they should go away in a few days. Ask your child's healthcare provider for advice on using a non-aspirin pain reliever. Side effects appear to be lower in this age group than in teens and adults.

Is my child at risk for myocarditis and pericarditis after the COVID Vaccine?

Cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the outer lining of the heart) have been reported following Pfizer-BioNTech COVID Vaccine. It occurs more often after the second dose and usually within several days after vaccination. It is most prevalent in male adolescents and young adults. Both myocarditis and pericarditis have the following symptoms: chest pain, shortness of breath, feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering or pounding heart. Most patients were treated with medication and rest then began to feel better quickly. The risk of myocarditis/pericarditis after vaccination is highest in males age 16-29 and is much less likely in males 5-11. Actual infection from COVID-19 is more likely to cause myocarditis/pericarditis than vaccination is (an estimated 20 -100 times more likely).

Can the vaccine cause infertility or other unknown future side effects?

There is no evidence that the mRNA vaccines can cause infertility. It does not travel to the reproductive organs. Also, unknown effects of the vaccine that occur months or years down the road are very unlikely. The side effects of all vaccines produced so far have all occurred within three months of giving the vaccine and most within 30 days. There is no reason to believe this is different.

When and where can my child receive the vaccine?

Children 12 and older are given the same dose as the adult Pfizer vaccine whereas a 1/3 dose is recommended for children between ages 5 to 11. Two doses given approximately three weeks apart are required. [Wayne Memorial Community Health Centers \(WMCHC\)](#) has options for COVID Vaccine administration.

- Pediatric COVID clinics will be held at WMCHC's pediatric sites. Please contact one of the offices below for more information and to make an appointment:

[Honesdale Pediatric Center](#) 1837 Fair Avenue in Honesdale 570-253-5838

[Pike Pediatric Center](#) 750 Route 739, Lords Valley 570-775-4264

[Waymart Pediatric Center](#) 27B Woodlands Drive, Waymart 570-488-9550

- Some on-site school COVID clinics will be held in conjunction with local districts. Please check with your child's school for more information.
- Visit www.wmchc.net and click on Schedule a COVID Vaccine for the most up-to-date information.



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