

# Information for parents and guardians on the COVID-19 VACCINE FOR 6 MONTH - 11 YEAR OLDS

## Why should I immunize my child against COVID-19?

### 1. The vaccine is the best way to protect kids from getting COVID-19

If your child is immunized:

- They have a greater chance of being protected from COVID-19.
- If they do get sick from the virus their symptoms are usually mild.

While COVID-19 infection in children is often milder than in adults, some kids infected with the coronavirus can get severe lung infections, become very sick and require hospitalization. Immunization will help protect them from severe symptoms and sickness.

### 2. The vaccine helps prevent or reduce the spread of COVID-19

Children can transmit the coronavirus to others if they're infected, even when they have no symptoms. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 protects your child from the virus and also reduces the chance they will transmit the virus to others, including family members and friends who may be more vulnerable to severe illness from the disease.

### 3. COVID-19 vaccines help protect the community

Vaccinating your child against COVID-19 helps protect the health of those in your community. High vaccination rates help reduce the spread of COVID-19, which helps protect everyone.

### 4. Vaccinating your child will help to keep them participating in things they enjoy

Children have experienced collateral harms from the pandemic. School disruptions, social isolation, and reduced access to academic and extra-curricular resources have had impacts on the mental and physical well-being of children and their families.

## COVID-19 vaccine information

### What vaccine will my 5 to 11 year old child receive?

Your child will receive the Pfizer (Comirnaty) pediatric COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is administered as a two or three\* dose series, recommended to be given 8 weeks apart. It will be given via an injection (needle) into the arm muscle. Children age 5 to 11 receive a lower dose (10 micrograms). Those age 12 and up receive a larger dose (30 micrograms). A booster dose is recommended 6 months after completing the primary series.

### What vaccine will my 6 month to 4 year old child receive?

Your child will receive the Moderna SPIKEVAX COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is administered as a two-dose primary series, recommended to be given 8 weeks apart. It will be given via an injection (needle) into the arm muscle for children 1 and older, and into the upper, outer thigh for children 6 months to 1 year old. Children aged 6 months to 4 years receive 25 mcg per dose.

### What are the benefits of the vaccine?

Vaccines are the best protection against COVID-19 infection. In clinical trials, the vaccine prevented children age 5 to 11 from becoming sick with COVID-19 and from severe illness (hospitalization and death) with 90.7% efficacy.

### Are the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Yes, the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is safe. In the clinical trials children who received the vaccine had no serious side effects. Health Canada does an independent drug review, which is recognized around the world for its high standards and rigor. Decisions are based only on scientific and medical evidence showing that vaccines are safe and effective. The Pfizer Comirnaty 10 mcg vaccine for children received Health Canada approval on November 19, 2021. The Moderna Spikevax 25 mcg vaccine for people 6 months and older received Health Canada approval on July 24, 2022.

## What are the side effects of the vaccine?

After getting vaccinated, it's common to have temporary side effects. These can last a few hours to a few days after vaccination.

This is the body's natural response, as it's working hard to build protection against the disease.

### Common vaccine side effects may include:

#### Symptoms at the injection site, such as:

- redness
- soreness
- swelling

#### Flu-like symptoms such as:

- chills
- fatigue
- joint pain
- headache
- mild fever
- muscle aches

#### Tips for side effects:

- If your child has a sore arm you can apply a cool, damp cloth or wrapped ice pack.
- If your child has pain or fever, you can provide medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

## Rare vaccine side effects

Rare reactions that have been reported and confirmed after taking a mRNA vaccine are:

Myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining outside the heart). **This reaction was not seen in any children age 5 to 11 in the clinical trials.** In those age 12 and up who had this rare reaction, most had mild illness, responded well to treatment and rest and fully recovered. Read our heart inflammation information sheet online at [www.yukon.ca/en/heart-inflammation-and-covid-19-mrna-vaccines](http://www.yukon.ca/en/heart-inflammation-and-covid-19-mrna-vaccines).

Severe allergic (anaphylaxis) reaction following vaccination is also very rare.

Serious side effects are rare. If you develop serious side effects or a severe allergic reaction (including hives, swelling of your face, tongue or throat, or difficulty breathing) seek medical attention or call 911 right away.

## Why and how was a COVID-19 vaccine developed so much faster than usual?

The efforts to find a vaccine for COVID-19 have been on a scale that's never been seen before. With so many resources put towards it, this vaccine was developed in record time. While the need to deliver the vaccine quickly was important, no steps in the approval process were missed. Instead, with more resources came faster results.

## Appointments

Appointment dates and times will be available online at [www.yukon.ca/this-is-our-shot](http://www.yukon.ca/this-is-our-shot). Clinic information will be posted as soon as it is scheduled. You can also call the COVID-19 InfoLine for information on clinic dates at times at 1-877-374-0425.

## Questions?

I have questions about the vaccine, where can I learn more?

Having questions about vaccination is normal. You can learn more by reading our COVID-19 mRNA vaccine information sheet for ages 5 to 11 ([www.yukon.ca/en/vaccine-information-5to11](http://www.yukon.ca/en/vaccine-information-5to11)) to help decide if vaccination is the right choice for you and your family. Your health-care provider is a great trusted source. Don't hesitate to ask them your questions.

When you look for information online, make sure it's from a trusted source. Examples are the federal or Yukon government health websites.

To read about the Health Canada recommendation visit: [covid-vaccine.canada.ca/comirnaty/product-details](http://covid-vaccine.canada.ca/comirnaty/product-details)