

UNDERSTANDING THE FACT SHEET: THE PFIZER-BIONTECH COVID-19 VACCINE FOR CHILDREN AGES 5–11

The Pfizer-BioNTech (often shortened to Pfizer) COVID-19 vaccine is authorized for children ages 5 to 11. It is currently the only COVID-19 vaccine in the U.S. for people younger than 18 years of age.

What is the same about the vaccine?

Like the Pfizer vaccine for people 12 and older, the vaccine for ages 5–11 is an *mRNA vaccine*. It contains messenger RNA (mRNA). mRNA is like an instruction manual. It teaches your child's body to make a harmless piece of a "spike protein," which is found on the surface of the virus that causes COVID-19. Their immune system responds to this piece of spike protein and creates disease-fighting cells and antibodies that can recognize and fight this coronavirus. The vaccine:

- **Does not** give you COVID-19.
- **Does not** change your DNA or genetic material.
- **Does not** cause infertility.
- **Does not** contain eggs, preservatives, latex, pork or other animal products, fetal cells or the coronavirus.

Like the vaccine for older children and adults, this vaccine needs two doses, at least 21 days apart, and offers full protection starting 2 weeks after getting the second dose.

What is different about the vaccine?

The Pfizer vaccine for children is nearly identical to the adult version, but is a lower dose (10 micrograms) than it is for individuals 12 years of age and older (30 micrograms). It has the same mRNA and active ingredients as the vaccine for older individuals, but uses different inactive ingredients. The ingredient that is different is called a buffer, which helps keep the vaccine stable and allows it to be stored at regular refrigerator temperatures longer than the original vaccine. This buffer is used in many other products, including products made for children.

What to tell your vaccine provider

Make sure your vaccine provider knows if your child has allergies, a bleeding disorder or is on a blood thinner, has had myocarditis or pericarditis (inflammation of the heart or lining around the heart), or is immunocompromised.

Mild side effects

Your child may have mild side effects after getting the vaccine. Common side effects can include:

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| • arm or injection site pain, swelling, or redness | • fever | • vomiting |
| • tiredness | • nausea | • fainting in association with getting the vaccine |
| • headache | • feeling unwell | |
| • muscle pain | • swollen lymph nodes (lymphadenopathy) | |
| • chills | • decreased appetite | |
| • joint pain | • diarrhea | |

These symptoms usually go away in a few days. If they don't, call your doctor or clinic.



Rare, but serious, problems



Allergic reaction

It is rare, but some people have had a severe allergic reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine. Everyone is asked to wait for at least fifteen minutes after vaccination to make sure there is no serious allergic reaction.



Myocarditis or Pericarditis

Rarely, myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining outside the heart) have occurred in some people (mostly teen and young adult men) who have taken the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The highest risk is in 16–19 year old men, with fewer cases in 12–15 year olds.

In most of these people, symptoms began a few days after the second dose of the vaccine. The chance of having this occur is very low — around 1 in 10,000 young men. Most cases are mild and almost all cases get better on their own.

Seek medical attention right away if your child has any of the following symptoms after receiving the vaccine:



Chest pain



Shortness of breath



Feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering, or pounding heart

Because there have been fewer cases of myocarditis in younger teens (12–15) than older teens (16–19) and the vaccine for 5–11 year olds is a smaller dose, we are hopeful that fewer younger kids will have myocarditis.

Get support

It is important to feel good about the decision to vaccinate your child. If you have concerns about your child taking the Pfizer vaccine after reading this information, you can get more information.

- If you have questions, ask to talk to someone at the vaccine event.
- You do not have to vaccinate your child. You may choose to wait until there are other vaccine options available.



SCAN ME

More information about the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine can be found in the full Fact Sheet from the FDA which is available for you to read and take home today.

Hold your smartphone's camera over this QR code to go directly to the info.

VISIT [MULTCO.US/COVID19](https://multco.us/covid19) FOR THE LATEST UPDATES

