



Sioux Lookout
First Nations
Health Authority

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COVID-19 Vaccine for Children Aged 5 and Up

November 19, 2021

Health Canada has approved the Pfizer Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine for children between the ages of 5-11.

Why should children get vaccinated against COVID-19?

Children play an important role in communities. It is important that they are protected against COVID-19.

Many children who get COVID-19 have mild illness and recover on their own. But some children can get very sick and need care in hospitals. Some children who get COVID-19 develop Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C). This is a condition where parts of the body become inflamed. This can be a very serious illness. Other children can have symptoms for months after they first recover. This is known as Long COVID. The COVID-19 vaccine can lower the chances of children getting severely ill.

The vaccine can also help children protect those around them. If a child gets COVID-19, they can spread the virus to others, even if they don't have symptoms. When a child is vaccinated, it is less likely that they will spread the virus to others.

How effective is the COVID-19 vaccine in children?

A recent study was completed with volunteers between the ages of 5-11. The study reported that the vaccine was 90.7% effective. Children had a very similar immune response to young adults. This suggests that the vaccine can help children develop strong immunity.

Is this vaccine different to the ones that adults received?

The vaccine is similar. Children will receive one third of the dose that adults and youth got. A smaller needle will be used for children.



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Is the vaccine safe for children?

No serious side effects were observed in the vaccine trial. Health Canada completed a thorough review of the Pfizer study. And experts believe the benefits of getting the vaccine outweigh the risks. Health authorities will continue to watch the vaccine data closely.

How many doses do children need to get?

For the Pfizer Comirnaty vaccine, children need two doses. These doses are given at least 8 weeks apart. The longer space between doses can help children develop a strong immune response.

How long until children are fully vaccinated?

It takes up to 14 days after the second dose for children to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Can children experience any side effects?

Some children may have mild side effects. This is normal. Side effects show that your body is building immunity against the virus.

Side effects can include:

- Redness and/or swelling where the shot was given
- Mild pain
- Headache
- Muscle and body aches
- Mild fever
- Nausea
- Feeling tired



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Are there any severe side effects?

Severe side effects are very rare. There are two severe side effects that have been observed in young adults. The inflammation of the heart muscle and its lining (myocarditis and pericarditis). This is a rare event following vaccination with an mRNA vaccine. These severe side effects have not yet been reported in children.

Most cases are treated quickly, and people make a full recovery. Experts will continue to watch the situation closely. At this time, the benefits of getting vaccinated outweigh the risks. If you have any questions or concerns, speak with a trusted healthcare worker.

If a child gets vaccinated against COVID-19, do they need a flu shot?

COVID-19 vaccines can protect children against severe illness from COVID-19. But the vaccine will not protect against the flu. Many children who get the flu only get mildly ill and can recover on their own. But some children can still get very sick and may be at risk for complications. So, it is recommended that children get their flu shot as soon as they can.

I have a child who is younger than 5. Can they get vaccinated?

At this time, children under 5 are not eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine. So, it is important that every eligible person around them does get vaccinated. This can create a circle of protection around unvaccinated children.

Do children still need to wear a mask after they are vaccinated?

Yes. Children need to continue to practice all the recommended public health measures. This is to help stop the spread of COVID-19. And keep everyone in the community as safe as possible.



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When will the vaccine be available?

There will be vaccines available at the nursing station soon. Listen for updates from your public health leadership and health authorities. They may soon be sharing when and where vaccine clinics will happen in your community. And keep following all the public health guidance.

Questions?

Write to us at ACWinfo@slfnha.com. You can also join us for a Facebook Live Q and A with Dr. Lloyd Douglas. They happen Wednesdays at 5:00 pm central time.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/news/2021/11/health-canada-authorizes-use-of-comirnaty-the-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-in-children-5-to-11-years-of-age.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/vaccination-children/covid-19.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines/pfizer-biontech-10-mcg-children-5-11-years-age/pfizer-biontech-10-mcg-children-5-11-years-age.pdf>

<https://www.slfnha.com/covid/covid-resources/covidvaccine/>

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>