

Get the facts:

Vaccinating children against COVID-19

Health Canada has approved the COVID-19 vaccine for children 5 to 11 years of age. The vaccine helps the body fight off the virus, so that children are less likely to get COVID-19 and experience its symptoms.



Although children are less likely to get really sick from COVID-19, they can still:

- › get sick from COVID-19
- › be infected and not have any symptoms
- › get a rare but serious complication called multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C)
- › spread COVID-19 to others
- › experience longer-term effects if they do get infected

The most common longer-term effects of COVID-19 include fatigue, headaches, weight loss, muscle pain, sleep disturbances, cough and difficulty thinking or concentrating.

Children with certain underlying medical conditions may also be at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, but some children who get severely ill have no risk factors.

Vaccination provides an extra layer of protection against the virus, and can help children participate more safely in important activities, like in-person learning, sports and social events.

What you should know



Scientists followed careful procedures when developing and reviewing the vaccines. Vaccines were available quickly because of dedicated research funding and an incredible level of international collaboration. The vaccines are based on science and technology that have been in development for many years for other infectious diseases.

The vaccines for children 5 to 11 years old are a smaller dose. As with many other vaccines, COVID-19 vaccine dosage is based on an individual's age, not on weight or size, since age is a key factor in the responsiveness of our immune systems. In the study of these vaccines, the smaller dose provided children with very good protection against COVID-19.

The vaccines can't give your child COVID-19 because they don't contain the virus that causes this disease.

The vaccines can't change your child's DNA. The vaccines never interact with DNA.

The vaccines don't affect your child's fertility. Multiple independent studies have shown that there is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility.

Side effects



Reactions to vaccination are usually mild and go away by themselves within hours or days. These can include redness, soreness and swelling at the injection site, and more general symptoms such as chills, mild fever, fatigue, headache, joint pain and muscle aches.

Severe allergic reactions are very rare and treatable. If they do occur, it is usually shortly after receiving a vaccine.

Vaccines are monitored for safety and side effects.

In addition to our strong COVID-19 vaccine safety monitoring system, Canada also has a safety surveillance system for pediatric vaccinations. The Immunization Monitoring Program ACTIVE (IMPACT) network is a pediatric, hospital-based network administered by the Canadian Paediatric Society. IMPACT has monitored childhood immunizations for more than 20 years.

If you have questions about COVID-19 vaccines, talk to a health care provider.

Get the facts. Learn more on Canada.ca/covid-vaccine and visit your provincial or territory website for information specific to where you live.



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