

## **Caregiver FAQs: COVID-19 Vaccine for Children ages 5-11**

### **1. Why should I get a COVID-19 vaccine for my child?**

COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to prevent COVID-19 infection, severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Although fewer children have been infected with COVID-19 compared to adults, children can still be infected, get sick, and spread COVID-19 to others. Children are also being admitted to hospitals at an increased rate as Delta has become the most common variant in the U.S. During a 6-week period in late June to mid-August, COVID-19 hospitalizations among children and adolescents increased fivefold. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is one of the best ways to slow the spread and resume activities children participated in prior to the pandemic.

### **2. Which COVID-19 vaccine should my child receive?**

Currently, only Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine has received Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA and CDC for children ages 5-11.

### **3. Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe and effective for children?**

Yes, the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. COVID-19 vaccines have undergone full evaluation in clinical trials and met the FDA's rigorous standards for safety and effectiveness. Additional clinical trials specifically for children helped determine the most effective dosing that would also minimize any unexpected side effects from vaccination. The FDA's teams of doctors, scientists, statisticians, and other experts thoroughly assessed the findings of these large studies in making their determination about COVID-19 vaccines in young children.

### **4. Are there any short-term or long-term side effects to the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Your child may have some side effects, which are normal signs that their body is building protection. Common short-term side effects include pain, redness, and swelling at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea. These side effects may affect your child's ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Serious side effects that could cause a long-term health problem are extremely unlikely following any vaccination, including COVID-19 vaccination.

### **5. How is the children's vaccine different from the adult or adolescent vaccines?**

The ingredients and formulation between Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine for children aged 5-11 and for those 12 and older are the same. The only difference between the vaccine for 5-11-

year-olds and those 12 and older, is the dosage. The vaccine for children aged 5-11 is two doses, each 10-micrograms and should be administered 21 days apart. This dosage is one-third of the doses for individuals aged 12 and older. Research demonstrated that the 10-microgram dose was optimal for safety, tolerability, and effectiveness in children aged 5-11.

## **6. My child already had COVID, do they still need to get the vaccine?**

Yes, your child should be vaccinated regardless of whether they already had COVID-19. Research has not yet shown how long you are protected from getting COVID-19 again after you recover. Vaccination will help protect your child even if they've already had COVID-19.

## **7. How can I prepare my child for their vaccine appointment?**

Pack your child's favorite toy, book, or blanket to comfort them during vaccinations. If your child is older, you can chat with them about what to expect:

- Be honest. Explain that shots can pinch or sting, but it won't hurt for long.
- Engage other family members, especially older siblings, to support your child.
- Remind your child that vaccines can keep him or her healthy.

## **8. What should I expect during and after my child's vaccine appointment?**

At your child's vaccine appointment:

- When your child receives their vaccine, you, your child, and the healthcare provider will all need to wear masks which cover your nose and mouth.
- You should receive a paper or electronic version of a fact sheet that tells you more about the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine your child received.
- After getting the COVID-19 vaccine, your child should be monitored on site for at least 15 minutes.
- If it is your child's first COVID-19 vaccination appointment, you should get a CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record card that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine your child received, the date they received it, and where they received it. Be sure to keep this card safe and bring it back with you for your child's second dose, 21 days later.
- Your child is considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after their second vaccine dose.

## **9. Where can my child get their COVID-19 vaccine?**

Your 5 to 11-year-old child can receive their Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine from a large network of vaccine providers across Kansas including doctor's offices, retail pharmacies, local health departments, and clinics. Information on locations offering vaccines for children is available on <https://www.vaccines.gov>.

## **10. I'm still not sure if I should get my child vaccinated – where can I get more information?**

Contact your child's pediatrician, primary physician or your local health department and ask questions. For additional information, visit the KDHE website at <https://www.kansasvaccine.gov/> or contact the KDHE hotline at 866-534-3463.