

COVID-19 Vaccine and Kids

Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital recognizes it can be challenging for parents and families to navigate the overwhelming amount of information available regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and kids. Below, we present frequently asked questions about the COVID-19 vaccine to help you make informed decisions to further protect the health of your children and your family.



How do we know that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for children?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which granted Emergency Use Authorization of COVID-19 vaccines, is globally respected for its scientific standards of vaccine safety, effectiveness and quality. The FDA has evaluated data from tens of thousands of study participants to ensure that each vaccine is safe. Based on this research, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that anyone who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine get vaccinated as soon as possible.



If my child has food allergies, is it safe for them to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Unlike the flu shot, COVID-19 vaccine does not contain food products such as egg proteins. Be aware, however, that some people have an allergy to polyethylene glycol (PEG), which is used in many medications, including the COVID-19 vaccine. If your child is allergic to PEG or has experienced a severe allergic reaction to other injectable treatments, please consult with a doctor.



In general, children have been at low risk from developing serious illness from COVID-19. Why should they get vaccinated?

Keep in mind, low risk is not no risk. While most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or have no symptoms at all, severe illness and death have been reported in children under the age of 1 as well as in children with underlying health conditions. Vaccines are helpful in preventing illness and disease, and the COVID-19 vaccine is no different. Getting vaccinated protects children from developing severe complications from COVID-19 and reduces the chance they could spread the infection to others.



My child has had COVID-19. Will natural antibodies be enough to protect them from another infection?

While doctors do not know yet how long we are protected after having COVID-19, they do know it is possible to contract the virus again—and early research is showing that natural immunity may not be as effective as vaccines in protecting against new strains of the virus. The CDC recommends vaccination even for those who were previously infected, especially as more infectious COVID-19 variants develop.

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What side effects can my child expect after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?

As with other vaccines, children may feel tired or have a sore arm, low-grade fever and other flu-like symptoms following COVID-19 vaccination. However, these symptoms are typically mild and go away within 48 hours.



Does the COVID-19 vaccine have a long-term impact on fertility? How can I be sure it won't affect my child's development?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is no evidence that any vaccine, including the COVID-19 vaccine, affects development or fertility. In fact, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that breastfeeding women get the COVID-19 vaccine so that antibodies can be passed through breastmilk and help protect their children from the virus.



There have been reports of heart inflammation in young people after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. How should this impact my decision whether to vaccinate my child?

Federal health officials—including those with the American Academy of Pediatrics—have advised that heart inflammation (myocarditis and pericarditis) is an extremely rare side effect of the COVID-19 vaccine. Importantly, for the young people who do experience this side effect, most cases are mild and individuals recover often on their own or with minimal treatment. Myocarditis and pericarditis are much more common in individuals who contract COVID-19, and the risks to the heart from COVID-19 infection can be more severe.

Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital believes in the safety and efficacy of all COVID-19 vaccines currently available and invites all members of our community 12 years of age and older to register for vaccination at [memorialhermann.org/vaccine-hub](https://www.memorialhermann.org/vaccine-hub).

To learn more about children and the COVID-19 vaccine, visit [memorialhermann.org/covid-vaccine-children](https://www.memorialhermann.org/covid-vaccine-children).