

Get the facts:

Vaccinating children against COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines help children fight off the virus that causes COVID-19, and offer strong protection against severe outcomes.

Health Canada has approved COVID-19 vaccines for children 6 months to 11 years of age. It's important for children to stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines. This means getting all vaccine doses recommended for them.



Vaccinating children against COVID-19 is beneficial for their health and well-being. Although children are less likely to get really sick from COVID-19, if they get infected, they could still:

- › require hospitalization from complications of COVID-19, such as difficulty breathing
- › experience longer-term effects even after they appear to have recovered from the illness (post COVID-19 condition, also known as “long COVID”)
- › experience a rare but serious complication called multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C)

Children with certain underlying medical conditions may also be at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Underlying medical conditions can include obesity, asthma, Down syndrome, neurological

disorders and immunocompromising conditions, but some children who get severely ill may not have any risk factors.

When combined with other individual public health measures such as staying home when sick and wearing a mask if age appropriate (children under the age of 2 years should **not** wear masks), vaccination provides an extra layer of protection against the virus. Vaccination helps the immune system to respond to the virus more quickly and protects against getting really sick with COVID-19.

Children who have already had COVID-19 should still get vaccinated. Vaccination after infection helps improve the immune response and may provide stronger and longer-lasting protection against COVID-19, including against new variants.

What you should know



Scientists followed careful procedures when developing and reviewing the vaccines. Vaccines were available quickly because of decades of science and technology advancements in vaccine development that laid the groundwork, new dedicated research and regulatory support and funding, and an unprecedented level of international collaboration.

Mild side effects can happen as your child's body responds to the vaccine. Reactions to vaccines usually go away by themselves within hours or days. These can include redness, soreness, 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 strong vaccine safety monitoring systems for adults, 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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