

COVID-19

Mature Minor Consent

Consent for vaccines

Parents or guardians and their children are encouraged to review and discuss the information about the vaccines being offered and the consent forms, and make a decision about immunization together.

If there are COVID-19 vaccination clinics held at schools during school hours, consent forms and immunization information will be provided to students in advance to bring home for discussion.

Mature minor consent

Children under the age of 19 who are able to understand the benefits and possible reactions for the vaccine, and the risk of not getting immunized, can legally consent to or refuse immunizations on their own. This means that your child may decide for themselves whether or not to receive a vaccine.

This process has been in place since the 1996 Infants Act was passed in BC, more information on mature minor consent can be found at www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/infants-act-mature-minor-consent-and-immunization.

Informed consent

Before accepting consent from a child, a health care provider has to give the child information about the vaccine. The health care provider will review the following information with the child (found at www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/covid-19-vaccines):

- Which vaccine they are due to get
- The benefits of getting immunized
- The risk of not getting immunized
- Common and expected side effects
- Rare serious side effects
- Medical reasons to not receive a vaccine

The health care provider will give the child time to read over the information and allow the child to ask questions. The child will then be asked questions to make sure they understand the information and are ready to make a decision. Any child who gives their own consent must give permission before their immunization records can be shared with the parent or guardian.

If the health care provider is not sure that a child understands, or a child is not ready to make a decision, the child will not be immunized without parental/ guardian consent.

How informed consent works

Health care providers who give immunizations are trained to discuss consent with individuals and assess the person's ability to provide consent.



The informed consent process is:

- Specific to immunization
- Client-centered
- Voluntary
- Obtained without misrepresentation

Steps to informed consent:

- 1 Assess capability of person giving consent
- 2 Provide standard information
- 3 Provide time for questions and answers
- 4 Give right to refuse or revoke consent

It is strongly encouraged that parents and guardians discuss the COVID-19 vaccinations with their children and work together to make decisions on consent for the vaccines.

