

Vaccines for children

6 months - 11 years old



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

- **Health Canada has approved two mRNA vaccines for children.**
 - The Moderna vaccine is for children 6 months – 11 years old.
 - The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is for children 5 – 11 years old.
- **The vaccines help protect your child from getting very sick with COVID-19.** Vaccinated children are much less likely to be hospitalized.
- **Millions of children have been vaccinated safely.** Side effects are usually mild and last 1-3 days. Serious reactions are extremely rare and treated quickly.
- **Register with the [Get Vaccinated](#) system.** You will be notified when your child is eligible for their first and second dose.

Why get your child vaccinated?

Most children who get COVID-19 have mild illness, but some can get very sick and need hospital care. Some have health issues that last weeks or months. Vaccines help prevent severe illness due to COVID-19.

Who is eligible?

Any child 6 months or older is eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccines are free.

- Children do not require a BC Care Card to get the vaccine.
- One parent, legal guardian or other caregiver (like a relative raising the child) is required to give consent.



How to get the vaccine?

Register with the Get Vaccinated system.

Online: getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca

By phone: **1-833-838-2323**

You will be notified to book an appointment when your child is eligible. You don't need to register again for the second dose.

Dosage & timing

Children are recommended to get **2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine 8 weeks apart.**



- Children and babies need a **smaller dose** than youth 12-17 and adults to get the same level of protection.
- Your child can get the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other childhood vaccines, including the influenza (flu) shot.

For more information

- BCCDC - [Children and Vaccines](#), [COVID-19 Data](#)
- How vaccines work – [ImmunizeBC](#)
- Teaching kids about vaccines - [Kids Boost Immunity](#)
- Vaccine testing and approval - [Health Canada](#)

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BEFORE THE APPOINTMENT

Inform your child - School-age children should be told about the vaccination one day before. Pre-school children should be told shortly before the appointment.

Answer questions - Encourage your child to ask questions. It's important they understand what will happen at the appointment and feel comfortable.

Prepare for nerves - To help school-age children, try the [CARD system](#): Comfort Ask Relax Distract



- If your child is anxious about needles, teach them simple breathing techniques to keep calm. Try the [belly breathing game](#) developed by BC Children's Hospital.
- Use [Jesse the bear's vaccine story](#) and [colouring pages](#). HealthLinkBC has [more information](#) on preparing your child for the vaccine.

DAY OF APPOINTMENT

- **Numbing creams or patches may help.** You can buy these without a prescription at most pharmacies. Apply them an hour before the appointment.
- Do not focus your child's attention on the needle with comments like "It'll be over soon" and "you'll be okay" as this can increase stress. Instead, **try to distract them** with toys or chatting and breathing techniques.
- You can hold your child **firmly on your lap** to calm them and keep them still.
- Health care providers at vaccine clinics are trained to work with children and can help support your child.



AFTER THE APPOINTMENT

- Your child may have **mild side effects** after the vaccine like sore arm, fatigue and body ache. These are common and usually go away after 1-3 days.



- You will wait for 15 minutes after the appointment so a health care provider can treat any rare serious reactions should they occur.
- After the vaccine, if you see symptoms like chest pain and shortness of breath, seek medical care or call 911.