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.

8 weeks

DOSE 1

DOSE 2

- 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

For more information, visit bccdc.ca or call 811

July 27, 2022
Vaccines for children
6 months - 11 years old

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.

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