

## Health Care Provider Toolkit: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children (Age 5-11)

Health care providers can have a significant influence on vaccine confidence because they are often seen as trusted sources of health information for their patients. This toolkit provides turnkey resources for health care providers for increasing knowledge, building vaccine confidence, and promoting vaccination.

This toolkit was adapted from a resource created by [Doctors of BC](#).

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Please adapt these resources to meet your needs. If you require other supports for your patients, you can email [vaccineconfidence@hamilton.ca](mailto:vaccineconfidence@hamilton.ca) your request.

### Evidence for COVID-19 vaccines in children and youth

- Canadian Pediatric Society
  - [Position Statement: COVID-19 Vaccine for Children 5 to 11 Years of Age](#)
- Health Canada
  - [Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- NACI
  - [Summary of the NACI Statement of November 19, 2021](#)
  - [Recommendation on the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine \(10mcg\) in children 5-11 years of age](#)

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## Key Messages

- Health Canada conducted a thorough review of the study data for the use of the vaccine in this age group and have determined it is safe and effective. Health Canada will continue to monitor its safety.
- Clinical trials showed that beginning 1 week after the second dose, the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty® COVID vaccine against symptomatic COVID-19 was about 90.7% effective for those 5-11 years old.
- A complete series with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) may be offered to children 5-11 year of age who do not have contraindications to the vaccine. NACI recommends a dosing interval of at least 8 weeks between the first and second dose for best immune response and decreased risk of myocarditis and/or pericarditis. However, as per our clinical protocol and with informed consent, Hamilton Public Health Services permits bookings of a 21-day interval between first and second doses.
- Children who receive the pediatric formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) for their first dose who turn 12 by the time of their second dose may receive the adolescent/adult formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (30 mcg) for their second dose. If a child who has turned 12 by the time of their second dose receives the pediatric formulation (10 mcg), their series should still be considered valid and complete.
- At this time, NACI recommends that children receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) at least 14 days before or after another vaccine if possible. This is a precaution to help to determine if a side effect that may arise is due to the COVID-19 vaccine or another vaccine, rather than a safety concern. The minimum waiting period between vaccines is precautionary and there may be circumstances when a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and another vaccine need to be given at the same time or less than 14 days apart.
- Parents or substitute decision makers of children aged five to 11 will usually have to provide consent on behalf of their child at the time of the appointment or fill out a paper [consent form](#) for their child.
- Children can experience side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine, similar to other vaccines. These side effects are part of their body's efforts to build immunity to COVID-19 following vaccination. Common side effects include: red or sore arm near the injection side, tiredness, headache, achy muscles or joints, or fever and child. These side effects are usually mild and go away within 1-3 days.

## Child and Youth FAQs

- Ontario Ministry of Health
  - [COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet: For Youth \(ages 12-17\)](#)
  - [COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet: For Children \(age 5-11\)](#)
  - [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Youth \(FAQs\)](#)

### Why should children get vaccinated?

Unvaccinated individuals are at the highest risk of getting COVID-19. While children who get infected with COVID-19 usually experience mild symptoms, some can get very sick, require hospitalization and/or ICU admission, and can experience more serious and longer lasting symptoms (i.e. Long COVID). Vaccinating children will reduce the risk of getting a COVID-19 infection and protect them from severe outcomes if they do. They vaccine will also help prevent the virus from spreading to other people.

### If my child is almost 12 years old, which vaccine should they get?

Children who receive the pediatric formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) for their first dose who turn 12 by the time of their second dose may receive the adolescent/adult formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (30 mcg) for their second dose. If a child who has turned 12 by the time of their second dose receives the pediatric formulation (10 mcg), their series should still be considered valid and complete.

### Why is the dose the same for all 5 to 11 year olds?

The effectiveness of a vaccine depends on the maturity of the immune system rather than body weight. For that reason, there are age-based dosing regimens for all vaccines.

### Will the COVID-19 vaccine cause reproductive health problems?

There is no evidence that any vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems or menstrual irregularities.

### Does the vaccine cause pericarditis and/or myocarditis?

A very small number of cases of myocarditis and pericarditis (heart inflammation) were reported after getting the COVID-19 mRNA vaccine. Most cases occurred in young adult males between 18 and 30 years of age after the second dose of vaccine, and most had mild illness and recovered quickly. No cases of myocarditis or pericarditis were found in the clinical trials among 5 to 11 year olds. There is a greater risk of myocarditis or pericarditis if someone gets COVID-19 compared to getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Resources for Health Care Providers

### Evidence-based

- Canadian Paediatric Society
  - [Childhood Immunization Education Module](#)
  - [COVID-19 Information and Resources for Paediatricians](#)
  - [Managing Pain and Distress in Children Undergoing Brief Diagnostic and Therapeutic Procedures](#)
- Centre for Effective Practice
  - [COVID-19: Vaccines](#)
- National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools
  - [Rapid Review: What is Known About Parents' Considerations for Vaccine Uptake for Children and Adolescents?](#)
- Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table
  - [Behavioural Science-Informed Strategies for Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Children and Youth](#)

### Pain Management

- About Kids Health CARD System
  - [CARD System Overview](#)
- Government of Canada
  - [Vaccination Pain Management for Children: Guidance for Health Care Providers](#)
- Immunize Canada
  - [Immunization Pain Management \(Clinician Focus\)](#)

### Vaccine Hesitancy

- National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases
  - [Vaccine Hesitancy and First Nations, Inuit and Metis populations – Potential implications during COVID-19](#)
- University of Calgary
  - [Vaccine Hesitancy Guide](#)

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## Ideas to Increase COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence

- Targeted calls and/or discussions to answer questions and increase motivation in parents and caregivers who are hesitant to vaccinate their child(ren). Incorporating [Motivational Interviewing](#) techniques can be helpful. Conversations could include:
  - a review of the benefits and potential risks of the vaccine,
  - a review of the risks of acquiring a COVID-19 infection,
  - an overview of safety and potential vaccine side effects.
- Ask every parent or caregiver that you have an interaction with if their child(ren) has received their COVID-19 vaccines. Consider adopting or adapting the City of Hamilton's **Minimal Contact COVID-19 Vaccine Intervention**. The MCI [Policy and Procedure](#), [Clinical Protocol](#), and updated [Quick Reference Tool](#) are included below.
- Share the reason why you got vaccinated (your 'why') with patients (e.g. in conversations, by video, on social media etc.)
- Host an online discussion or Q&A session for families
- Participate in media interviews
- Participate in [COVID-19 Community of Practice](#) session webinars with other Ontario family physicians
- Share information and resources (see Resources section below)

## Resources to Share with Families

These are examples of resources. Please adapt these resources to meet your needs. If you require other supports for your patients, you can email your request to [vaccineconfidence@hamilton.ca](mailto:vaccineconfidence@hamilton.ca).

- [Fact Sheets](#)
- [Websites](#)

### Fact Sheets

- AboutKidsHealth

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- [Improving the Vaccination Experience: A Guide for Parents and Caregivers](#)
- Ontario Ministry of Health
  - COVID-19 Vaccines for Children & Youth ([English](#)) ([French](#))
- Toronto Public Health
  - [How to Talk to Kids about Getting Vaccinated](#)

## Websites

- AboutKidsHealth
  - [COVID-19 Learning Hub](#)
- City of Hamilton
  - [COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Children](#)
- Hamilton Health Sciences
  - [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Youth](#)