

The Importance of COVID Vaccinations for 5-11 Year Olds

From the office of *Dr. Carly Wilbur*, UH Pediatrician and **psi** Medical Director



Many parents have eagerly awaited the expansion of the FDA's approval for Pfizer's COVID vaccine. This ruling has paved the way for up to 28 million U.S. children to gain protection from serious infection.

Here's what you need to know:

Q: IS THE VACCINE EFFECTIVE?

A: Kids in clinical trials demonstrated robust immune responses (in line with 16-25 year olds who got a full vaccine dose) with just a 10 microgram dose, about one-third of the adult dose of the vaccine. Researchers reported a 91% efficacy rate in terms of protecting children from a serious symptomatic COVID infection.

Q: IS THE VACCINE SAFE?

A: Some study participants reported mild fever, headache, and fatigue, much like the adult population. The lower dose of the vaccine is credited with the lower incidence and severity of side effects. The rare complication of myocarditis, inflammation of the heart, in young men who receive the vaccine has been reported, but in the trial performed by Pfizer on 5-11 year-olds, no participants had this happen. Reports estimate the risk of cardiac disease from COVID versus COVID vaccination is 8-10 times greater.

Q: WHY SHOULD CHILDREN GET VACCINATED?

A: As of this writing, almost two million children aged 5-11 have been infected with COVID, and 8,300 have been hospitalized (about a third requiring intensive care in the ICU). Almost 100 of these patients have died due to COVID infection. According to the FDA, COVID now ranks in the top ten causes of death for children aged 5-11.

Q: SHOULD ALMOST 12-YEAR-OLDS WAIT OR GET VACCINATED NOW?

A: Experts agree that time is of the essence. Because the dose is based on age and not weight, it doesn't matter if a 9-year-old is the size of an average 12-year-old. It's more important to get protection sooner, so 11-year-olds should get their vaccines as soon as possible and not wait until they turn 12. The lower dose of vaccine is adequate to mount an immune response but is designed to minimize potential side effects.

psi is pleased to share this important information with you, your family and your school. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Carly Wilbur, MD
UH Pediatrician and **psi** Medical Director
health@psi-solutions.org
800.841-4774 ext. 226