

For Ages 12 and Older: WHAT PARENTS AND GUARDIANS SHOULD KNOW

On May 12, Wisconsin expanded COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to include adolescents age 12-15. This means, anyone age 12 and older can get protection against COVID-19 through vaccination.

Where can I learn more about the vaccine?

Wisconsin COVID-19 vaccine information:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine.htm

What to expect when you get the vaccine:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-prepare.htm

Benefits of getting vaccinated:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html



Which vaccine can my adolescent get?

At this time, the Pfizer vaccine is the only vaccine available for anyone age 12 and older. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are only authorized for use in adults age 18 and older.

Why should my adolescent get vaccinated?

COVID-19 virus is always looking for a new person to infect - that is how it survives - and the reason why it spreads from person-to-person. By getting vaccinated, your adolescent will be protected from getting sick and reduce the chances of spreading the virus to others.

Some adolescents and children can get very sick from COVID-19, and may require hospitalization. In rare cases, they may die. Medical experts are also learning about the long-term effects of COVID-19 in children. One rare but serious condition associated with COVID-19 is called multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), and is being closely investigated. One of the best ways to protect your adolescent from the serious health consequences of COVID-19 is to get them vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccines provide good protection against known COVID-19 variants. The more people who get vaccinated, the less chance the virus has to mutate. Getting vaccinated is one of our best tools to protect our health and stop the spread of the virus. Getting vaccinated brings us closer to going back to normal activities like playing sports and having in-person birthday parties.

Is the vaccine safe for my adolescent?

The Pfizer vaccine has gone through the same safety tests and met the same standards as all other vaccines authorized in the U.S. Millions of people have already gotten the COVID-19 vaccine safely and very few people have had any severe side effects. In fact, people are more likely to have serious long-term effects from getting sick from COVID-19.

If you have more questions, we recommend you connect with your child's primary care doctor.

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How does the vaccine work?

The Pfizer vaccine is an mRNA vaccine. That means the vaccine contains mRNA which gives your cells instructions on how to make coronavirus spike proteins. Those proteins then allow your immune system to produce specific antibodies that defend against COVID-19. So if the real virus enters your body, your immune system can fight it off to help prevent you from getting sick.

mRNA vaccines do not put a weakened or inactivated virus into your body and cannot give someone COVID-19. Your cells break down and get rid of the mRNA as soon as it is finished using the instructions. The vaccine does not affect or interact with your DNA in any way. The benefit of mRNA vaccines, like all vaccines, is that those who are vaccinated gain protection against COVID-19 without ever having to risk getting hospitalized or dying from COVID-19.

Where can my child get vaccinated?

Check out [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services \(DHS\) website](https://www.wisconsin.gov/health), or call toll-free at 1-844-684-1064 to learn where your child can get vaccinated.

What else should I know about the COVID-19 vaccine?



✓ The vaccine is free for everyone.



✓ Some people have post-vaccination side effects. This is normal and means your body is building up the protection that it gets from the vaccine.



✓ The Pfizer vaccine requires two doses separated by 21 days. Make sure to mark your calendar for your second dose so your child can get fully vaccinated.

