

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

about the COVID vaccine for children with disabilities



Q: What COVID-19 vaccines are available for kids with disabilities?

A: All three vaccines are considered safe and effective. Pfizer is available for people ages 5 and up. Moderna is available for people ages 18 and up. If you can't get a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for medical reasons or because you simply prefer not to, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is available to people ages 18 and up.

If you're the caregiver of a child with a disability who is not yet eligible for a vaccine, the best way you can lower their risk of getting COVID-19 is to get vaccinated yourself. You'll lower the chance of becoming sick and passing the virus to your child.

Q: When will the COVID-19 vaccine be available for younger children?

A: Clinical trials for both Pfizer and Moderna are currently underway for children as young as six months old. For more information about when COVID-19 vaccines will be available to children under 5, visit the CDC's [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#).

Q: Why are kids with disabilities at higher risk of COVID-19?

A: They are at higher risk because they may have other health problems like heart disease, obesity, or diabetes that put them at higher risk for COVID-19.

People with disabilities may also have trouble understanding or following safety measures.

Q: How do I know the COVID-19 vaccine is safe for my child?

A: Clinical trials with tens of thousands of participants showed the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for adults and children ages 5 and older. The FDA approved emergency use authorization based on those extensive trials. Millions of people in the U.S. have received COVID-19 vaccines, including people with disabilities. Safety monitoring, which is ongoing, shows that the vaccine is just as safe for people with disabilities.

Q: Is there a link between COVID-19 vaccines and autism?

A: No, but an infection of any kind during pregnancy (for example COVID-19) has been linked to a greater risk of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in children—another incentive to be vaccinated.



For more information: CovidVaccineWA.org

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Q: Will an mRNA vaccine like Pfizer or Moderna change my child's DNA?

A: No, in fact mRNA vaccines don't interact with your DNA at all. Once the mRNA has done its job—instructing your immune system to protect you from COVID-19—your body breaks it down and eliminates it.

Under no circumstances can the COVID-19 vaccine infect you with the virus that causes COVID-19, or affect the DNA of a child born to a vaccinated person.

Q: What side effects should we be prepared for?

A: Like many vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines can lead to short-term side effects. Some people may have no side effects at all, while others may experience the following:

- Pain, redness, and swelling at the injection site
- Fever and/or chills
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Muscle pain

These side effects typically go away in a day or two and can be managed with over-the-counter medicines. Long-term side effects are very unlikely. Allergic reactions to the COVID-19 vaccine are rare but this is why you will need to wait in the clinic for 15 to 30 minute after the vaccination. If you have a reaction, there are medications to quickly treat it.

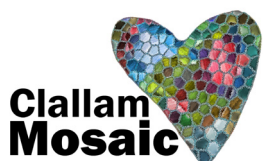
Q: Does the COVID-19 vaccine cause myocarditis?

A: A very small number of adolescents and young adults have developed mild cases of myocarditis (heart inflammation) after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

This appears to be an extremely rare side effect that has affected mostly males after the second dose of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. These cases typically occur within four days after vaccination.

While the possibility of myocarditis is concerning, it can usually be treated easily with anti-inflammatory medications. The risks of getting sick from COVID-19 far outweigh the risk of myocarditis, and people who get COVID-19 can also develop myocarditis.

From the American Academy of Pediatrics: "Thousands of children have been hospitalized, and hundreds have died after being infected with COVID-19. Some children who have recovered still experience lingering symptoms. In fact, getting infected with COVID-19 itself is much more likely to cause myocarditis than the vaccine."



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