

## COVID-19 Vaccines for Children Under 5 Part 2

### Vaccines are safe for children 6 months to 5 years

- Before authorizing or approving COVID-19 vaccines, scientists conducted clinical trials with thousands of children and teens to establish their safety and show that the vaccine should work.
- Like with vaccines for older age groups, the vaccines for young children were found to be safe, and these vaccines should be effective at preventing severe disease and death.
- Side effects after vaccination are normal and go away with in a day or two (and not every child will have side effects.) Common side effects included pain, tiredness, and fever—similar to what we saw for other age groups.
  - **There were no reports of rare and serious side effects** like anaphylaxis, myocarditis/pericarditis, Bell's palsy or MIS-C.
- Through continued safety monitoring, COVID-19 vaccination has been found to be safe for children and teens.
- The known risks and possible severe complications of COVID-19 outweigh the potential risks of having a rare, adverse reaction to vaccination.

### Why get your child vaccinated/impact of COVID-19

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, COVID-19 has caused more than 2 million cases, over 20,000 hospitalizations, and over 200 deaths among U.S. children ages 6 months to 5 years.
- Children 6 months to 5 years of age are at risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
  - More than half of hospitalized children ages 6 months–4 years had no underlying conditions.

### The importance of well-child visits for Minnesota children

- If your child does not have a regular health care provider, such as a pediatrician or family physician, now is a great time to connect with one and ensure that your child is up to date on all of their vaccinations and regular medical needs.
- Many children and adolescents have missed important well-child visits and recommended vaccinations during the pandemic.
- Well-child visits are important for tracking your child's growth and developmental milestones. They also give you the opportunity to discuss any concerns about your child's health, and get routine vaccinations to prevent illnesses like measles, whooping cough, and other serious diseases. Well-child visits are a great time to get your child their COVID-19 vaccine and to ask your provider any questions.
- As children and adolescents are doing more in-person activities, and as we prepare for the next school year, this is a great time to make sure they are caught up on missed well-child visits and recommended vaccines.
- Keep your kids on track - schedule a well-child visit for your child now.

## COVID-19 vaccines for the whole family

- Now that vaccines are authorized for children 6 months to 5 years old, the whole family can receive strong protection against COVID-19 by staying up to date on their shots.
- Three vaccines are recommended for adults age 18 and older: the Pfizer vaccine, the Moderna vaccine, and in limited situations the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- Two vaccines are recommended for children age 6 months and older: the Pfizer vaccine and the Moderna vaccine (Right now, Moderna is recommended through age 5; and 18 years and older).
- Your “primary series of vaccine” refers to **the initial number of doses of a particular vaccine that a person needs**. It does not include booster shots.
- Getting your primary vaccine series provides strong protection against severe illness and death. But being up to date on booster doses is very important for staying protected against serious cases of COVID-19.
- Minnesotans age 5 and older are recommended to get a booster shot, if eligible:
  - **People age 18 and older who got the Johnson & Johnson vaccine** should get a booster shot at least 2 months after their single dose. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are recommended over the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
  - **People age 18 and older who got the Moderna vaccine** should get a booster shot at least 5 months after their primary series of vaccine.
  - **People age 5 and older who got the Pfizer vaccine** should get a booster shot at least 5 months after their primary series of vaccine. People who are 5 through 17 years of age can only receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as their booster dose.
  - **Second boosters are recommended for:**
    - People ages 50 years and older.
    - People ages 12-49 years who have certain immunocompromising conditions.
    - People 18 and older who received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine for their initial dose and booster dose. The second booster shot should be given at least 4 months after the first booster and it should be either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.