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Children age 5-11 now eligible for COVID-19 vaccination in Missouri

***More than 533,000 of Missouri's population includes children age 5-11 who will
now be eligible for vaccination***

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) has [adopted](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendation for children ages 5-11 to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. The CDC's recommendation, [announced yesterday](#), was made based on an in-depth review of available safety, immunogenicity and efficacy data. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) [expanded the emergency use authorization](#) for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children on October 29.

Previously, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was authorized for use in individuals age 12 and older. The vaccine for children age 5-11 is a smaller dose (10 µg), which is a third of the dosage for individuals 12 years and older (30 µg). The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is administered as a series of two doses, 3 weeks apart, for all eligible individuals.

"As a parent myself, I understand the concerns about vaccinating their young children," said Donald Kauerauf, DHSS Director. "It is important to make an informed decision based on factual, scientific information, not what is available in a social media feed. I highly encourage parents to discuss their child's vaccination with their pediatrician or trusted medical professional."

In clinical trials, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was found to be more than 90 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 in children age 5-11. Vaccine side effects were mild and similar to those seen in adults and with other vaccines recommended for children. These are normal signs that their body is building protection, but they should go away in a few days. The most common side effect was a sore arm.

"While it is less common for a child to become severely ill or need hospitalization due to COVID-19, that risk certainly does exist, which became more evident during the recent Delta variant

surge,” said Kauerauf. “The Delta variant is still prevalent among COVID-19 cases, and it is impacting people differently than what we witnessed a year ago. Also, we know kids can and do spread the virus and can unknowingly cause severe illness in others including senior citizens and at risk populations.”

According to census data, more than 533,000 of Missouri’s population includes children age 5-11 who will now be eligible for vaccination.

Missourians over the age of 12 are still encouraged to get vaccinated if they have not done so to date. Sufficient supplies of vaccines are available throughout the state.

Distribution of just over 116,000 pediatric doses across the state began earlier this week, with federal plans to scale up to full capacity over the next two weeks. Providers operating under the state’s standing orders should follow the guidance as written for COVID-19 vaccine administration for children age 5-11. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine that is given to adults and adolescents cannot be used for children age 5-11.

Providers who pre-ordered pediatric vaccines are listed at [MOStopsCovid.com](https://mohhs.missouri.gov/mohhs-covid-19), and later this week [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) will list locations on an interactive map where vaccine is available. You can also text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you.

Both the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccines are authorized for use in individuals 18 years and older and will continue to be available to adults. Get the facts about COVID-19 vaccines and find a vaccine near you at [MOStopsCovid.com](https://mohhs.missouri.gov/mohhs-covid-19).

[Parents + Kids COVID-19 FAQs](#)

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About the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services: The department seeks to be the leader in protecting health and keeping people safe. More information about DHSS can be found at health.mo.gov or find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @HealthyLivingMo



We aspire to protect health and keep the people of Missouri safe.

