

Facts About COVID-19 Vaccine for High-risk Pediatric Populations



Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect children and adults from COVID-19.

- Children and adults who get vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have acute and long-term complications from COVID-19 such as hospitalization and/or long COVID.
- The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for children and adolescents.
- All children aged 6 months and older need a COVID-19 vaccine every year.
- The COVID-19 virus changes, so the vaccine is updated every year.
- You can get the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines, like the yearly flu shot.
- Even if you've had COVID-19 before, it's still important to get the vaccine every year.
- Mild side effects mean your body is building protection against the virus.
- The most common vaccine side effects are arm pain, feeling tired and headaches.
- Side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine are usually mild and go away in a day or two.

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Risks of COVID-19 in High-risk Pediatric Populations



Children with high-risk health conditions have an increased risk of both acute and long-term complications of COVID-19, including a higher likelihood of developing long COVID.

High-risk conditions include:

- obesity
- diabetes - types 1 & 2
- chronic lung disease
- prematurity
- seizure disorders
- cardiac disease (congenital or acquired)
- pediatric cancer, immunocompromised states

Acute COVID-19 complications may include:

- Severe lower respiratory tract disease requiring oxygen or ventilatory support
- Sepsis or septic shock with hypotension and multi-organ dysfunction
- Exacerbation of underlying chronic conditions (e.g. heart failure, seizure disorders)
- Mental health and neuropsychiatric issues (e.g. anxiety, depression, cognitive dysfunction, insomnia, psychosis)
- Fatigue interfering with daily functioning

Long COVID:

- Can occur following mild or asymptomatic acute infection
- Persists for greater than three months after initial infection
- May present as continuous or relapsing symptoms
- Can involve multiple organ systems

Long-term COVID-19 complications may include:

- Chronic fatigue and exercise intolerance
- Neurocognitive symptoms (e.g. cognitive impairment, "brain fog", recurrent headaches)
- Persistent respiratory or cardiovascular symptoms (e.g. chronic cough, chest pain, palpitations)

