



TALKING POINTS: Independent Panel Approves Authorization of Pfizer's COVID-19 Vaccine Expansion to Children Ages 12-15

On Wednesday, May 12, 2021, the Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices (ACIP) affirmed the FDA's authorization of Pfizer's vaccine to children, ages 12-15. Its recommendation means that pediatricians and family physicians can begin administering the vaccine immediately.

The Pfizer expansion is a long-awaited move that will allow approximately 16 million children to safely return to in-person classes, visits with family, and school-related events and gatherings.

Vaccination against COVID-19 infection is the only sure path toward ending the pandemic and a steady recovery that allows us to once again enjoy the moments, memories, and people we miss most.

Impact:

- Expanding the Pfizer vaccine to teens and pre-teens means scores of students will return to in-person school this fall, see their loved ones, and engage in social activities; further advancing efforts to return our nation --- and their lives--- to some form of normalcy.
- Many individuals in Black, Brown, indigenous, and AANHPI communities live in multigenerational households – Pfizer's expanded authorization to children 12-15 means more households will have increased chances from staying clear of COVID-19 infection.
- The Pfizer authorization extends eligibility to children in tens of millions of U.S. families.
- Approximately 8.4 million 12-15-year-olds in Black, Brown, indigenous, and AANHPI communities will now be eligible for vaccination.



Why This Demographic Is Important:

- Younger people can still contract serious cases of the virus, including hospitalization and death.
- Adolescents, ages 12-17, are at risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19. For example, more than 1.5 million reported cases and more than 13,000 hospitalizations fall in this age group.
- Vaccinating younger people is a key component of safely opening up schools and hosting larger, normal academic gatherings.
- Adolescents contribute to COVID-19 transmission in households and communities, including older and vulnerable populations.
- Younger people who don't experience symptoms can transmit the virus asymptomatically, putting their teachers, parents and others around them at risk.
- According to medical authorities, vaccinating children in particular shields others in the community from the COVID-19 virus. This includes those who are immuno-compromised or are not protected by the vaccine.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among children between the ages of 0 and 17, Latino children represent nearly 30% of COVID-19 cases, and Black, non-Hispanic children, represent 12.6% of such cases.

Next Steps:

- Physicians and vaccine administration facilities will now begin accepting appointments for children, ages 12-15.



Calls-to-Action

- COVID-19 vaccination remains the only way to end the pandemic.
- Parents should have their children vaccinated as soon as they are eligible and learn more about the vaccines if they have questions at [MadeToSave.org/learn](https://www.madetosave.org/learn).
- Parents should include their children's vaccination in their family vaccination plan.
- Parents who have not yet been COVID-19 vaccinated should be vaccinated as soon as possible and tell their family and friends to do the same.

FAQs

1. Where can I get the vaccine for my child?

Consult with your pediatrician or family physician to determine availability and how soon you can make an appointment.

2. What are the benefits of having my children vaccinated?

Since younger people who don't experience symptoms can transmit the virus asymptotically, it is crucial that they be vaccinated as soon as possible. Also, having your child vaccinated will prevent them from developing a serious illness from COVID-19. As we increase the number of vaccinations, we will see fewer restrictions and more quickly get back to the people, events, and things we miss most.

3. I am strictly opposed to my children being vaccinated. Can they receive the vaccination without my consent?

Most states require parental consent to get the COVID-19 vaccine. However, at



least nine (9) states do not require consent. Please consult with [your state's Health Department](#) or VaxTeen's [Consent Laws by State](#) resource to learn what your state requires.

4. **Will the COVID-19 vaccine affect my child's fertility?**

The medical community has absolutely no data showing that the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine causes fertility issues in children or adults.

5. **My children are afraid to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. What should I say to allay their fears?**

Fear among children is understandable. Many of us can relate. Whether it is a fear of shots or fear of the doctor --- a child's fear is real and valid, even more so in this era. You can help quell your children's fears by explaining how being vaccinated will allow them to help keep their loved ones and communities safe and help end the pandemic. Also, the sooner they are vaccinated, the sooner they will be able to hang out with their friends, go to the movies, or attend school sporting events without worrying about getting sick with COVID-19 and then spreading the virus to others.

6. **My child is opposed to getting the vaccine. What points can I share to help convince them otherwise?**

It might be helpful to explain the serious health risks they could develop if not vaccinated --- Adolescents, ages 12-17, are at risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19. More than 1.5 million reported cases and more than 13,000 hospitalizations fall in this age group. Vaccinating this age group is essential for us to end the pandemic. They also contribute to transmission in households and communities, including older and vulnerable populations.



7. My child already had COVID-19 twice. At this point, is being vaccinated even necessary, helpful?

Yes. In order to end the pandemic and for our nation to return to any form of normalcy, everyone must be vaccinated and this includes 12-15-year-olds, regardless of whether they have been infected with the COVID-19 virus.

8. Every adult in my household has already been vaccinated, so why does my child need to be vaccinated?

Adolescents, ages 12-17, are at risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19. They also contribute to transmission in households and communities, including older and vulnerable populations. Regardless of the vaccination status of your adult family members, it remains important to include children in your family's vaccination plan.