

## COVID-19 vaccine is now available for children aged 5 to 11

Vaccines are safe, effective, and the best way to protect your child, your family, and community from COVID-19. Vaccines will help children and families to safely resume normal activities as soon as possible.

Health Canada has approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 mRNA vaccine for children aged 5 to 11.

### Where to Get the Vaccine

Vaccine can be accessed at one of the following:

- **Child and youth COVID-19 vaccination clinics** (please visit [myhealthunit.ca/GetVaccinated](https://myhealthunit.ca/GetVaccinated) for up-to-date information on scheduled clinics across the Health Unit district)
- **General COVID-19 vaccination clinics** (limited supply of paediatric vaccine expected to be available at clinics after November 27, 2021)
- **Participating pharmacies and primary care providers** (call in advance to verify availability of paediatric vaccine)
- **Indigenous-led vaccination clinics** (call in advance to verify availability of paediatric vaccine)

### How to Book a COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment

- If you **do** have a Health Card (OHIP) - book online at [Ontario.ca/BookVaccine](https://Ontario.ca/BookVaccine) or call 1-833- 943-3900. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 8p.m. daily. The online booking system will only allow one child to be booked in at a time.
- If you **do not** have a Health Card (OHIP) – call the Health Unit’s COVID-19 Call Centre at 1-844-478-1400 or 1-705-995-3810. Our Call Centre is open from 8:45 a.m. to 4:30p.m. Monday to Friday.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) is recommending that **children receive two doses of Pfizer BioNTech vaccine, at least eight weeks apart**. NACI also recommends that children receive the Pfizer vaccine at least 14 days before or after another vaccine. This recommendation is to reduce the chance of a side effect being attributed to the wrong vaccine.

### More Information

Most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or none at all. However, some children with COVID-19 can get very sick. Children can also spread COVID-19 to other people. Vaccinating children protects them from getting sick and reduces virus spread within their household and the community.

To help you and your child make an informed decision, the Health Unit has developed [a fact sheet](#) (attached) based on expert medical advice and scientific information. It covers several key areas including:

- Safety of the vaccine for children
- Why vaccination is important
- Effectiveness of the vaccine for children

As well, we have a [dedicated webpage](#) that outlines how to book and prepare for your child's vaccination appointment. You and your child are also encouraged to talk to your health care provider or contact [your local public health unit](#) if you have questions about the vaccine. The nurses at our clinics are well trained in vaccinating children and youth, and are happy to accommodate your family's needs in any way possible. If you have something you would like to ask about before attending a clinic, contact our COVID-19 Call Centre at 1-844-478-1400 or 1-705-995-3810 (local).

Lastly, the **SickKids Vaccine Support Line** offers a free, safe, and judgement-free space to have an open conversation about the COVID-19 vaccine for children and youth. Over the phone interpretation is available free in many languages. Appointments can be [booked online](#) or by calling 1-437-881-3505.

Supporting your child to be vaccinated against COVID-19 is an important step in the fight against this disease. It will be a key factor in helping our school community return to a sense of normalcy and will benefit overall physical and mental health for children, youth and their families.