

COVID-19 vaccine for high-risk children and youth

Information for parents and guardians

Facts about the vaccine

Children and youth born between 2006 and 2009 (turning 12 to 15 by the end of this year) can now get Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine if they have a health condition that makes them more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 infection. You'll find a list of these health problems [online](#).

When deciding about vaccine, parents and guardians need to know these facts:

- This vaccine is approved in Canada for 16 year olds and up.
- Using this vaccine in a younger age group is currently considered "off-label", which means it hasn't yet been approved to generally be used in this age group, but can still be used with informed consent.
- Some studies on this vaccine have been done in children and youth aged 12 to 15. These showed the vaccine is safe and effective in this age group ([Pfizer-BioNTech Announce Positive Topline Results of Pivotal COVID-19 Vaccine Study in Adolescents](#)).
- Health Canada is looking at these studies to decide if the vaccine can be licensed for children aged 12 years to 15 years but they haven't finished their review yet.
- While this review happens, in Alberta, parents and guardians can make a decision to have their child get the vaccine if their child will be turning 12 or older this year, and if they have a health problem listed at [alberta.ca](#).
- If parents/ guardians have questions, they can talk to their child's doctor, but they don't need to get a letter before getting immunized through a participating pharmacy or AHS (www.ahs.ca/covidvaccine or call Health Link 811).
- In Alberta, eligibility for vaccine is based on year of birth and not just age. That is why some 11 year olds can get the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine if they were born in 2009 and will be turning 12 before the end of the year.
- The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) supports offering this vaccine to high risk children and youth aged 12 to 15 ([Recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines - Canada.ca](#)).
- Even though most children do not get really sick from COVID-19 infection, some children with serious health problems are more likely to be hospitalized than are other children if they are infected. We do not know the specific risk for every given medical problem.
- Information we have right now shows that the vaccine works as well in children in this age group as it does in adults.

Learn more

Find more information about the COVID-19 vaccines or the roll-out of Alberta's immunization program at alberta.ca/vaccine.

Links:

- <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid19-vaccine-phase-2B-eligibility-fact-sheet.pdf>).
- <https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-biontech-announce-positive-topline-results-pivotal>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/recommendations-use-covid-19-vaccines.html>