COVID-19 Vaccination for Children and Teens with Disabilities

Updated June 19, 2022

What You Need to Know

- COVID-19 vaccination for children and teens is safe and effective.
- Everyone 6 months and older, including those with disabilities and underlying medical conditions, should get vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Everyone 5 years and older should get a booster, if eligible.
- Use CDC's COVID-19 booster tool to learn if and when your child or teen can get boosters to stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines.

Children and youth with special healthcare needs require more care for their physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional differences than their typically developing peers. A special healthcare need can include physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, as well as long-standing medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, a blood disorder, or muscular dystrophy. Learn more about Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs in Emergencies.

1 in 6 children ages 3 through 17 years of age has **one or more developmental disabilities.**

Children and Teens with Disabilities Are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19

Many children and teens with disabilities have underlying medical conditions such as lung, heart, or kidney disease, a weakened immune system, cancer, obesity, diabetes, some blood diseases, or conditions of the muscular or central nervous system. Children and teens with one or more underlying medical condition are more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19.

Similarly, children and teens with developmental disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, an intellectual disability, or autism, may be more likely to experience mental health conditions from social isolation. They can also experience barriers to getting needed health care and other support, and can have other characteristics that increase their risk of COVID-19, including:

- Limited mobility
- Need for important support services

- Challenges practicing preventive measures, such as wearing a mask
- Challenges communicating symptoms of Illness or being sick

Getting Children and Teens with Disabilities Vaccinated against COVID-19

The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination outweigh the known and potential risks

- COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to be safe and effective at protecting against COVID-19 and preventing severe illness if infected.
    - In clinical trials, about 20% of children and teens who participated had an underlying medical condition.
- Some children and teens with a weakened immune system should get an additional dose of vaccine as part of their primary COVID-19 vaccination series.

Prepare all children and teens for the vaccination visit and use resources such as picture stories for support during and after vaccination.

After vaccination, parents and caregivers should continue following all current prevention measures recommended by CDC.

Learn more about COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens.

Requesting accommodations at COVID-19 vaccination sites

When making an

Children with service animals are allowed by law to have them accompany them at COVID-19 vaccination sites.

appointment or arriving for vaccination, parents and caregivers can let staff and/or volunteers know their child might need some accommodations.

COVID-19 Vaccine Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL)

Call 888-677-1199 Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (EST) or email

DIAL@usaginganddisability.org to help:

- Find local vaccination locations
- Make appointments
- Connect to local services such as accessible transportation

Home visits: If a child under your care is unable to leave the home, contact your state, territorial, local ↗ , or tribal health department to request an in-home vaccination.

Related Pages

› COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit

› COVID-19: Toolkit for People with Disabilities

› COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations for Children and Teens

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