

Patient updates

Nov. 19, 2021

Dear patients,

We are writing to share information about the COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5-11. Today both Health Canada and National Advisory Committee on Immunization's released their approval and guidance for use of the Pfizer vaccine in this age group. In this communication, we will share information about:

- Why you should get your child vaccinated
- Quick facts you should know to inform your decision
- Reminder about our upcoming Patient Town Hall and how to register
- Trusted resources you can access for more information

As healthcare providers and parents, we will be vaccinating our own children because the research shows that the vaccine is safe and effective. We encourage you to do the same.

Why you should vaccinate your children

- The vaccine reduces risk of getting COVID-19 by 90 per cent
- Avoiding illness means not missing school or activities
- Avoiding illness means less chance of passing infection on to others who may be more at risk of getting sick or experiencing hospitalization

Quick facts you should know to inform your decision

We know you want the best for your children and that you likely have a lot of questions. We encourage you to read this [Max the Vax fact sheet](#) with questions and answers you may have. A few additional things to know are:

- The dose for children aged 5-11 is one-third the dose for teens and adults

- In Ontario, first and second doses will be given about eight weeks apart. This helps to boost the immune response and reduces the risk of side effects.
- The most common side-effects are similar to other vaccines that your children may have experienced, such as mild pain at the injection site, headache, and fatigue. These can be managed by Tylenol and get better in one to two days.

Reminder about our upcoming Patient Town Hall

Join us Tuesday Nov. 23, from 7 - 8:30 p.m. where we discuss this recent update. We will have a panel of physicians, including a pediatrician, a nurse and a pharmacist to provide information about vaccines for 5-11 year olds and answer your questions. There is space still available. Please go to our [website](#) to register.

Trusted resources you can access for more information

Here are some trusted resources where you can get more information:

- “[Max the Vax](#)” is an excellent website produced by the Canadian Medical Association that includes answers to common questions and links to videos, articles and more
- [The University of Waterloo](#) School of Pharmacy has several relevant resources put together by a group of patients, scientists, doctors, and pharmacists, who have no conflicts of interest. These include videos and this [two-page FAQ](#) on the COVID-19 vaccines for children
- These are two great resources for managing pain and anxiety: [the CARD system](#) and this [guide for families](#)
- [About Kids Health](#) and [Kids Health First](#) are reliable sources of information on children’s health and will have information on the COVID-19 vaccine in children
- The [vaccine consult service](#) run by the Hospital for Sick Children offers free telephone consultations to parents and children who have questions

Where your child can get their COVID-19 Vaccine

At this time, we will **not** be providing COVID-19 vaccines for 5-11 year olds in our clinics. We recommend reaching out to pharmacies and community vaccine clinics to book an appointment. Depending on where you live, your child may be able to get their vaccine at their school.

Information about booking options, and how to book will become more available next week. We will send out another communication once these become available. If you need assistance in booking your child's vaccine, you can call our clinics and press 8. Our clerical team will be happy to provide more information and booking options.

If you have any specific vaccine related questions, you can call to book a virtual visit with your provider to discuss in more detail.

Take care and be well,

SMHAFHT Leadership Team