

# COVID-19 vaccine

## Important information about the Comirnaty Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 12-15

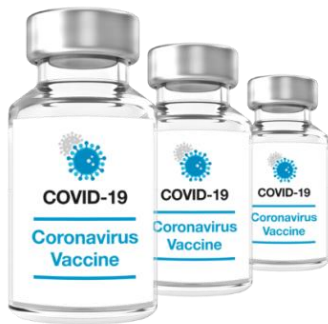
### Easy to Read guide

Version 12  
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Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

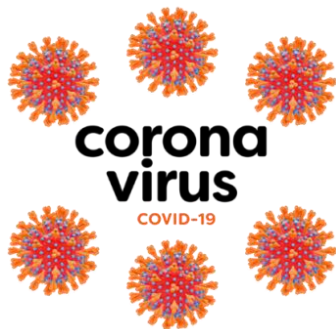
## About this leaflet



This leaflet tells you about the COVID-19 vaccine.



This vaccine is for children aged 12-15 years.



This leaflet will tell you what COVID-19 is.



This leaflet will tell you why your child is being offered the COVID-19 vaccine.

## What is COVID-19?



COVID-19 is a sickness that has spread around the world.



COVID-19 can affect your lungs and sometimes other parts of your body.  
It is a very serious sickness.



COVID-19 can make it hard for you to breathe.



If you have COVID-19, you may:

- feel hot and have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- have chills
- have a dry cough
- feel tired.



If you have COVID-19, you may feel like you have the flu or a cold.



It can take 2 weeks before you show signs of COVID-19.

These signs are called symptoms.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can mean you get a cough or chills.



If you have any symptoms, you will need to self-isolate in your room.

This means staying on your own, away from other people.



You should check to see if you need a COVID-19 test.

You can get more information at [www.hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie)



You can telephone the HSE live helpline.  
The number is 1800 700 700.

## COVID-19 and children aged 12-15



Most children and young people aged 12 to 15 who get COVID-19 have very mild symptoms or no symptoms at all.



If your child has COVID-19, they have to stay home from school.



It is very rare that children and young people end up in hospital with COVID-19.

Most children will not need intensive care treatment. The risk is very low.



Sometimes, COVID-19 symptoms can last for weeks or months.

This is known as long COVID.

The risk of long COVID is lower in children than in adults.

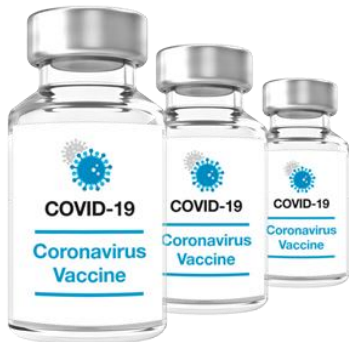


Children with certain health conditions are at more risk and could get very sick if they get COVID-19.

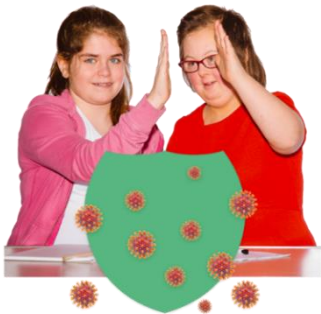
Very rarely, COVID-19 may give you a serious illness that causes problems with many organs of the body.

A small number of children can die from this illness.

## What is the COVID-19 vaccine?



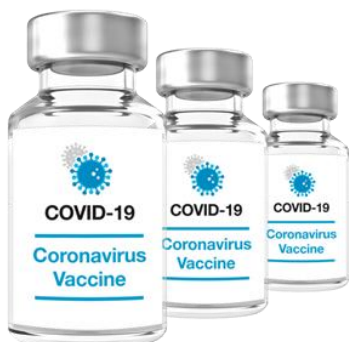
The COVID-19 vaccine helps your body to protect you from COVID-19.



The vaccine will help your child's body make antibodies.

Antibodies can help you to fight COVID-19.

## What vaccine is my child being offered?







Your child is being offered a vaccine called Comirnaty.

It is made by Pfizer/BioNTech.

The vaccine your child has been offered is an mRNA vaccine.





The vaccine has been changed to protect your child better against different types of COVID-19, called variants.

## Consent for your child to be vaccinated

	<p>Before a child gets the vaccine, a parent or legal guardian will be asked to give their consent.</p>
	<p>Giving consent means you agree to your child getting this COVID-19 vaccine.</p> <p>You can say yes, or you can say no.</p> <p>The choice is yours.</p>
	<p>Your child will not be allowed to attend their COVID-19 vaccine appointment on their own.</p>
	<p>You can read about the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine in the patient information leaflet.</p> <p>You should do this before giving consent for your child to get the COVID-19 vaccine.</p>



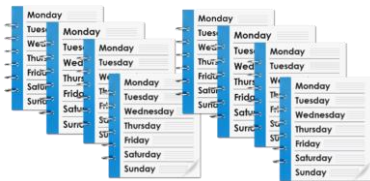
## Why is the COVID-19 vaccine and first booster dose being offered to all children aged 12-15?

	<p>The COVID-19 vaccine and booster dose is being offered to all children, aged 12-15, to help protect them and the people around them from COVID-19.</p>
	<p>People are less likely to become very ill with COVID-19 if they have their COVID-19 vaccine and booster doses.</p> <p>Children who are vaccinated will be less likely to miss school and other activities because of COVID-19.</p>
	<p>The COVID-19 vaccines and booster doses are strongly recommended for children who have a health condition or weak immune system.</p>
	<p>The COVID-19 vaccines and booster doses are strongly recommended for children that live with someone that could get very ill if they get COVID-19.</p>

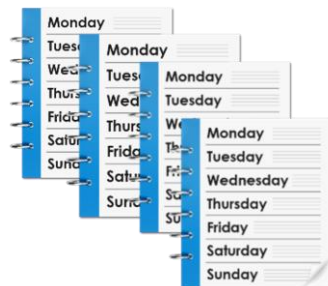
## How many doses of the COVID-19 vaccine will my child need?



Your child will need 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.



Your child will get the second dose of the vaccine 8 weeks after their first dose.






If your child has a weak immune system, they will get their second dose, 4 weeks after the first dose.

They may need an extra dose 8 weeks after their second dose.



Then, they get a booster dose 4 months after their extra dose or COVID-19 infection.

## Why is a first booster offered to all children aged 12-15?

	<p>All children, from 12-15 years of age, can get a first booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.</p> <p>They can get this 4 months after their second dose.</p>
	<p>The protection that your child has from their vaccinations may weaken over time.</p> <p>We hope that the booster dose will give better protection against COVID-19.</p> <p>This is important with the Omicron variant as it spreads easily.</p> <p>A booster dose cuts down the chance of illness and the need for hospital care in children this age.</p>
	<p>There are more good than bad things about getting the booster dose.</p> <p>Children will not get as ill if they get COVID-19.</p> <p>They will not have to miss school and other activities.</p>

## Why is an autumn booster doses being offered to some children aged 12 to 15?



The autumn booster is being offered to children aged 12-15 with a weak immune system.

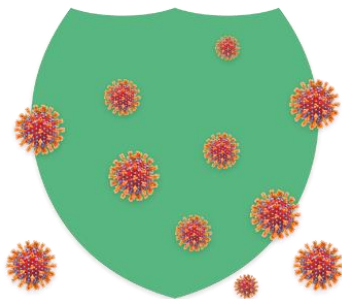


This is because the protection from their first vaccines may weaken with time.  
Booster doses give your child extra protection from COVID-19 and help stop them from getting very sick.



The autumn booster dose should be given 6 months after the last vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

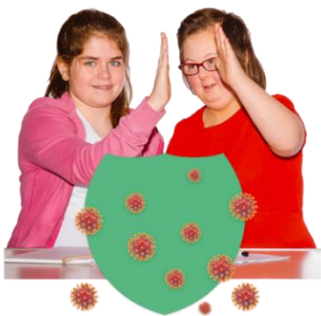
## Why are some children with medical conditions being offered an autumn booster dose?



If your child has a medical condition that means they could get very sick from COVID-19, they will be offered an autumn booster.

This is because:

- the protection from the vaccine may get weaker over time
- your child might be at more risk of getting very ill from COVID-19.




Keeping up to date with their booster vaccine gives your child extra protection from COVID-19.

It helps to stop them getting very ill.

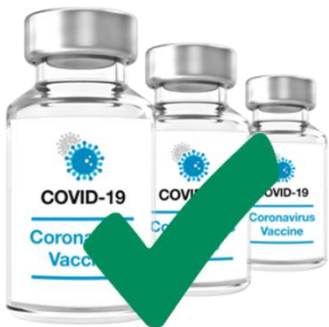



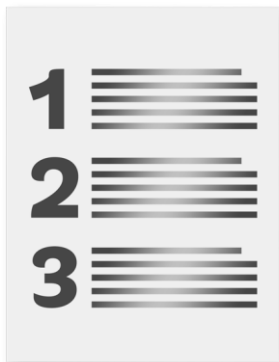
Your child will get their autumn booster 9 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

## Does the COVID-19 vaccine work for children aged 12-15?

	<p>The COVID-19 vaccine works well at stopping COVID-19 in children aged 12-15.</p>
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## Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for children aged 12-15?

	<p>This COVID-19 vaccine has been tested by scientists to see if it is safe.</p> <p>A scientist is a person who tries to understand how our world works.</p>
	<p>The COVID-19 vaccine has already been given to millions of children aged 12 to 15 years across the world.</p>



In Ireland, the National Immunisation Advisory Committee gives advice on COVID-19 vaccines.

This Committee agreed the plan for COVID-19 vaccines and boosters for children aged 12 to 15 years.



The European Medicines Agency said this COVID-19 vaccine and first booster doses are safe to use in Ireland.

You can find out more here:

[www.ema.europa.eu](http://www.ema.europa.eu)



We have less information about the safety of third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine or the booster doses.



You should talk to your child's GP, nurse, or vaccinator if you have any questions about the safety of this vaccine.



**My child already had COVID-19.**

**Can they get the COVID-19 vaccine?**



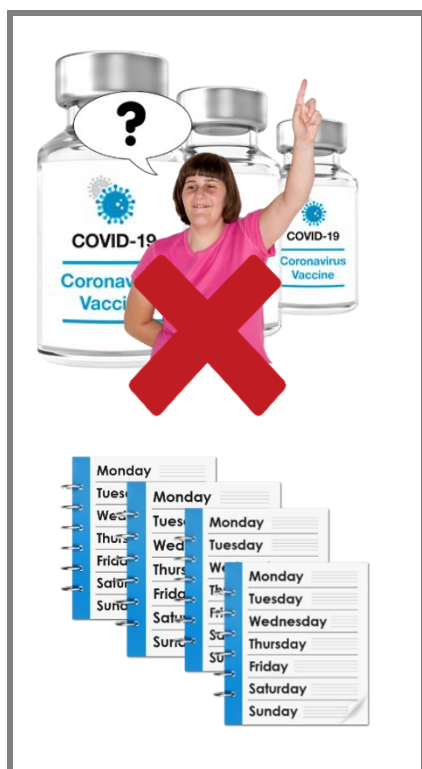
Yes.

Your child can get the COVID-19 vaccine if they have had COVID-19 already.

The vaccine will cut down the risk of getting COVID-19 infection again.

**My child has COVID-19 now.**

**Can they get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

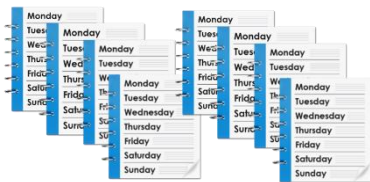
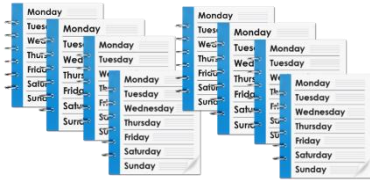


Your child should not get the COVID-19 vaccine if they have COVID-19 now.

If your child is due to have their first dose of the vaccine, they should wait until

- 4 weeks after they first got symptoms
- or
- 4 weeks after they tested positive for COVID-19.





If your child is due to have their second dose of the vaccine, they should wait until

- 8 weeks after they first got symptoms, or
- 8 weeks after they tested positive for COVID-19.

If your child has a weak immune system and had COVID-19 after their second vaccine:

- They do not need an extra dose if they had COVID-19 more than 7 days after their second vaccine.
- They can get a booster 4 months after they had COVID-19.

If your child gets COVID-19 within 7 days of getting their second vaccine, they should get their extra dose 4 to 8 weeks after they had COVID-19.

## Can my child get the COVID-19 vaccine if they have a high temperature?

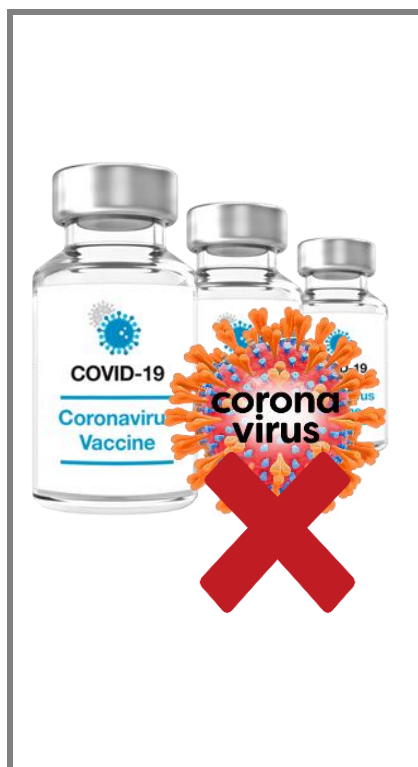


No.

Your child should not get the COVID-19 vaccine if they have a high temperature.

They can get the COVID-19 vaccine when they are feeling better and do not have a temperature.

## Can the COVID-19 vaccine give my child COVID-19?



No.

The COVID-19 vaccine cannot give your child COVID-19.

They may catch COVID-19 before getting their vaccine.

They may not know they have the symptoms until after they get the vaccine.



If your child has any symptoms of COVID-19 after they get the vaccine, they will need to self-isolate.

This means staying away from other people until 48 hours after they feel better.

48 hours is 2 days.



You should do this if they get a high temperature more than 2 days after they get the COVID-19 vaccine.



You can check [www.hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie) to see if they need a COVID-19 test.

## Who will give my child their COVID-19 vaccine?






The person that gives your child their COVID-19 vaccine is called a vaccinator.

Vaccinators are trained by the HSE to give COVID-19 vaccines.



The vaccinator will answer any questions you have.

## How will the COVID-19 vaccine be given to my child?

	<p>The COVID-19 vaccine is given to your child as an injection.</p>
	<p>The injection is given in your child's upper arm.</p>
	<p>You will be given an advice leaflet and a vaccine record card.</p> <p>This will give you information about the COVID-19 vaccine that your child was given.</p>

## What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?



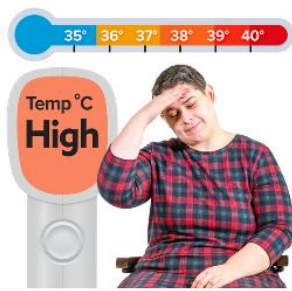
Some people get side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine.



Some of the side effects are:

- soreness, swelling, redness, or itching where your child had their injection
- swollen lymph glands – seen more after a booster dose
- sore knees, elbows, or other joints
- pain in the arm where you got the vaccine
- sore muscles
- sore head
- feeling sick or getting sick
- diarrhoea
- not feeling hungry
- feeling tired, having no energy, or feeling weak





- chills or fever - a high temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- feeling itchy or having a rash
- finding it hard to sleep
- sweating a lot or night sweats
- dizziness
- feeling unwell.



Some people get other side effects.  
These do not happen often.

Rarely people may have:

- weakness in the muscles on one side of your face
- allergic reaction that can cause hives or swelling of the face.



It is extremely rare for someone to have a severe allergic reaction to the COVID-19 vaccine.

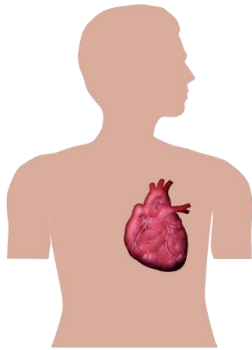
Your vaccinator is trained to treat you if you have a serious allergic reaction.



Extremely rarely, a person may have:

- a skin reaction that causes red spots or patches - this looks like a bulls-eye
- a lot of swelling of the arm or leg where you got your vaccine
- tingling or prickling sensation, or loss of sensation in some part of the body
- swelling in your face - this can happen to people who have had injections, called cosmetic fillers, on their face
- heavy periods.





Very rarely, a person may get a problem with their heart or lining of their heart after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

This is called Myocarditis or Pericarditis.

This happens more in young men.

This is seen more after getting the second dose.

This can happen within 2 weeks of getting your COVID-19 vaccine.

The risk of Myocarditis may be lower in those aged 12-15 years than other teenagers and young people.

The symptoms of Myocarditis and Pericarditis are:

- being out of breath
- fast heartbeat
- chest pain.

Contact your doctor straight away if your child has any of these symptoms.

## What if my child gets a high temperature after they get the COVID-19 vaccine?



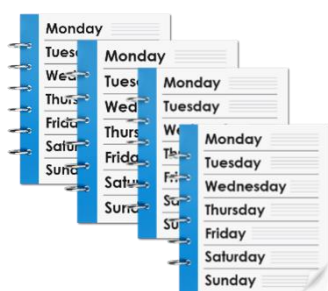
If your child gets a high temperature after the Pfizer vaccine, it normally goes away in 2 days.

If they feel uncomfortable, you can give them Paracetamol or Ibuprofen.

Follow the instructions on the box or leaflet for your child.

If you are worried about your child talk to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

## My child had the mpox vaccine recently. Can they get the COVID-19 vaccine?



No.

Mpox is a different illness.

If your child had the mpox vaccine recently, they need to wait 4 weeks before they get their COVID-19 vaccine.

This is because there may be a risk of a heart problem called Myocarditis.

## Can my child get the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?



Yes.

Your child can get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as any other vaccine except mpox vaccine.

This includes their nasal spray flu vaccine and any vaccines they get in school.

## If my child gets side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine who should I tell?



If your child gets side effects after they get their COVID-19 vaccine, you can report this to your GP or Nurse.

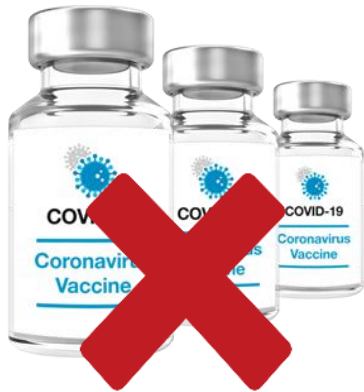
All side effects can be reported to the Health Products Regulatory Authority by you.

You can find out more here:

[www.hpra.ie/report](http://www.hpra.ie/report)

Your doctor or nurse can make a report for you too.

## Some children should not get the COVID-19 vaccine



Your child should not get this COVID-19 vaccine if they have had a bad reaction to any of the ingredients.

This includes an ingredient called polyethylene glycol.

This is also known as PEG.

You can find out about the ingredients here:

[www.hse.ie/COVID19VaccinePIL](http://www.hse.ie/COVID19VaccinePIL)



Talk to your doctor before your child gets this vaccine.

Talk to your doctor if your child had a bad reaction to any vaccine or medication before.



Your child should not get this COVID-19 vaccine if their doctor has said not to get this Pfizer vaccine, or another COVID-19 vaccine called Moderna.



Your child should not get the COVID-19 vaccine if they had a bad reaction to the first dose of this COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.



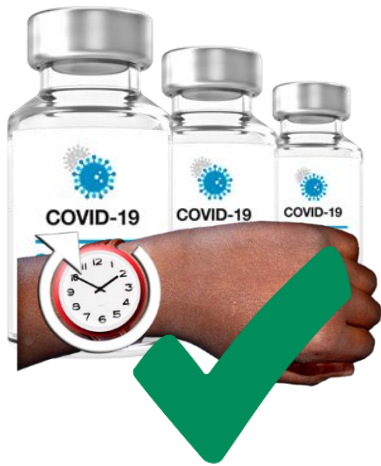
Your child should not get the COVID-19 vaccine if they have had a severe allergic reaction to Trometamol.

This is a dye used in MRI studies.



Before getting this vaccine talk to your doctor if your child had Myocarditis or Pericarditis after a COVID-19 vaccine.

## How long does it take for the COVID-19 vaccine to work?



This COVID-19 vaccine works 7 days after your child gets their second dose of Pfizer vaccine.

Most people who get this COVID-19 vaccine will have immunity and be protected from COVID-19.

Your child may still get COVID-19 after they get this COVID-19 vaccine, but their symptoms may not be as bad.

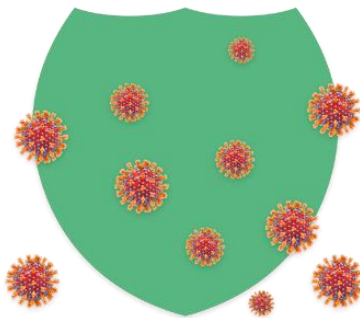
## Does the COVID-19 vaccine work for everyone?



Scientists said this COVID-19 vaccine works for most people who get it.

Millions of people all over the world have had a COVID-19 vaccine.

This has helped to stop them from getting COVID-19.



It has helped to stop the spread of COVID-19.

It has helped to stop people from getting very sick from COVID-19.

It has cut down the number of people dying from COVID-19.



If your child has a weak immune system, the COVID-19 vaccine may not work as well for them.

There are no extra risks to them if they get the vaccine.



## How long will my child be protected from COVID-19 after they get the COVID-19 vaccine?



We do not know how long your child will be protected from COVID-19 after they get their vaccine.

Scientists are still trying to find this out.

Boosters can help to keep you protected for longer from COVID-19.

## Can my child spread COVID-19 to other people after they get the COVID-19 vaccine?



We do not know yet if your child can still spread COVID-19 after they get the Pfizer vaccine.



It is still very important to follow public health guidelines for people who have had their vaccine.

## Where can I get more information about the COVID-19 vaccine?



You can get more information online at [www.hse.ie/COVID19Vaccinematerials](http://www.hse.ie/COVID19Vaccinematerials)

You can read the patient information leaflet here: [www.hse.ie/COVID19VaccinePIL](http://www.hse.ie/COVID19VaccinePIL)



You can phone the HSE Live helpline.  
The number is 1800 700 700.

## How will my child's personal information be used?



We need to get some personal information from you to make sure we give the vaccine to your child in the right way.

The HSE have to protect your information and keep it private.

This is called General Data Protection Regulation.

You can find out more here:

[www.hse.ie/eng/gdpr](http://www.hse.ie/eng/gdpr)

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This leaflet will be updated as new information becomes available.

For the latest information on this COVID-19 vaccine, go to [hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie)