

# Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine: Youth 12-17



February 26, 2022

Getting two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine plus a booster lowers the chance of getting, spreading and becoming seriously sick from COVID-19. Getting vaccinated will help youth do the activities they love more safely, including sports, recreation activities, as well as hanging out with friends and family.

## Youth & COVID-19 infection

[COVID-19](#) is a viral infection that mainly affects the lungs. Most youth who have COVID-19 usually get mild symptoms or none at all. Some youth can get very sick and may require hospitalization or get long-lasting symptoms including feeling tired, trouble breathing, trouble concentrating or muscle aches.

## Who Can Get the Youth Vaccine?

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is:

- Approved by Health Canada for 12 years and older.
- Recommended and preferred vaccine for youth, including as a booster.
- Safe for all youth, including people with a health condition such as allergies, asthma, diabetes or a weak immune system.
- Safe for anyone who is on medication, is pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Carefully monitored and millions of doses have been given worldwide.

The second dose is given 8 weeks after the first dose. A booster dose is given at least 168 days (6 months) after the second dose. People who have a weak immune system should get [three doses](#), plus a booster after 168 days (6 months). Learn more about [booster doses](#).

## Wait to Get Vaccinated

- If you have a fever or any COVID-19 symptoms: wait until you are feeling better. Learn about [when to get vaccinated](#) after having COVID-19.
- If you are [required to self-isolate](#): wait until your isolation period is over.

## Informed Consent

Youth should talk about the benefits and risks of getting the vaccine with a parent or trusted adult.

Parent consent may not be needed if the person 12 years or older is able to: understand information about the vaccine, why it is being recommended and what will happen if they accept or refuse vaccination. Students under 14 years old who get vaccinated at a school clinic during school hours need parent consent.

## How the Vaccine Works

Pfizer-BioNTech is an mRNA vaccine that teaches our immune system to make antibodies that protect us from COVID-19. The vaccine does not contain the COVID-19 virus, so you cannot get an infection from the vaccine.





# Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine: Youth 12-17

## Vaccine Ingredients and Allergies

The vaccine contains lipids (fats), salts, sugars and buffers. It does not contain eggs, gelatin (pork), gluten, latex, preservatives, antibiotics, or aluminum. The vaccine is safe even if you have food, medication or environmental allergies. Speak with your health care provider first if you are allergic to polyethylene glycol (PEG). Allergic reactions, including serious reactions (anaphylaxis), are rare. Allergic reactions can be treated and are usually temporary. Get medical help if you have trouble breathing, or develop hives or swelling in the face and throat.

## Side Effects and Risks

About 1 in 5 people have side effects from the vaccine. Most are mild to moderate, and last one to three days. Side effects usually mean that the vaccine is working to build your immune system.

### Common side effects include:

- redness, pain, itching or swelling at the injection site
- fever
- headache
- feeling tired
- muscle aches
- joint pain
- chills
- nausea and/or vomiting

## Myocarditis and Pericarditis

Myocarditis and pericarditis (types of heart inflammation) can occur following a COVID-19 infection and can be serious. Rarely, it can occur after getting vaccinated. If it occurs after vaccination, it is mild and gets better on its own within a few days. Get medical attention if you develop chest pain, shortness of breath, or your heart is pounding/racing in the first few weeks after vaccination. Vaccination is still recommended as the benefits are greater than any risk.

## COVID-19 and other Vaccines

It is safe to get other vaccines at the same time as your COVID-19 vaccine. Waiting 14-days before or after your COVID-19 vaccine is not required. Talk to a health care provider for more information.

### Consult a Health Care Provider if you:

- Take medications that weaken your immune system – you may want to time your vaccination with your medications.
- Had an allergic reaction four hours after receiving a previous COVID-19 vaccine dose.
- Have severe allergies to any of the vaccine ingredients.
- Had Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C).

For more information: Talk to your health care provider and visit [toronto.ca/COVID19](https://toronto.ca/COVID19).