

# COVID-19 VACCINES: AGES 5 - 11

Last week the FDA and CDC authorized Pfizer COVID-19 vaccinations for people age 5 through 11. At Northern Light Health, we believe that vaccination is our best tool to prevent the spread, serious illness, and death from COVID-19.

While children are less likely to become seriously ill from COVID-19 it can happen. More often, they may spread the virus to at risk family members and friends. Some children with mild symptoms of COVID-19 have had longer term health issues known as long COVID syndrome or post-acute COVID syndrome. Vaccination also means it is less likely that your child will miss school from COVID-19 illness or exposure.

## Making the Decision to Vaccinate

We know that many people are excited to protect more of their family members from COVID-19, we also know that many of you have questions – we want to help answer them. Some answers to some of the most frequently asked questions for vaccinating those age 5-11 are below.

- **Vaccine Dose:** The vaccine authorized for ages 5-11 is the same vaccine used for those 12 and over, but it is a smaller dose. The vaccine is specifically made to meet this dosage and is supplied in a multi-dose vial.
- **Safety:** The vaccine's safety was studied in approximately 3,100 children age 5 through 11 who received the vaccine and no serious side effects have been detected in the ongoing study.
- **Side Effects:** In the study, the vaccine side effects for those 5-11 were mild to moderate and were similar to those for people 12 and over: injection site pain (sore arm), redness and swelling, fatigue, headache, muscle and/or joint pain, chills, fever, swollen lymph nodes, nausea, and decreased appetite.
- **Which Vaccines Are Available:** At this time, only the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine has been authorized for use for people ages 5-11.
- **Effectiveness:** Immune responses of children 5 through 11 years of age were comparable to those of individuals 16 through 25 years of age. In addition, the vaccine was found to be 90.7% effective in preventing COVID-19 in children 5 through 11.
- **Does My Child Need This Vaccine:** For questions specific to your child's health, COVID-19, and the COVID-19 vaccine, please reach out to their pediatrician or primary care team. From a public health perspective, the more people vaccinated against COVID-19 the better it is for all of us. Slowing and stopping the virus from spreading means moving towards a world where COVID-19 no longer affects our day-to-day lives.

## How to Get Vaccinated

For community members between ages 5 - 11, there are many options to get vaccinated:

- **Northern Light Health Pediatrics and Primary Care offices.** While many practices do not offer COVID-19 vaccine specific appointments outside of the registration tool, patients can be vaccinated during any check-up, wellness, or other scheduled care appointment with their care team. This is subject to vaccine availability.
- **Northern Light Health COVID-19 Vaccination Centers.** Guardians can register children 5-11 using our online registration tool at [covid.northernlighthealth.org](https://covid.northernlighthealth.org). Phone registration is available on a limited basis at 207-204-8551 (long distance charges may apply).
- **Special, Community-Based Vaccination Events.** In regions where demand outpaces appointments, there may be COVID-19 vaccination events offered on specific days and times for those ages 5-11. This information will be shared locally.
- **Retail Pharmacies and More.** Just like adults and teens, people ages 5-11 will be able to get vaccinated at many retail pharmacies. Vaccines for all eligible Mainers (and visitors) are also available at many non-Northern Light Health locations around the state. If you cannot find a date and time that works for you at Northern Light Health, we encourage you to visit the full list of COVID-19 vaccination sites at [www.maine.gov](https://www.maine.gov) or to call the Maine COVID-19 Community Vaccination Line at 1-888-445-4111.

**If you have questions specific to your child's health, COVID-19, and the COVID-19 vaccine, please reach out to your pediatrician or primary care team.**