



# How to get a COVID-19 vaccine for children

COVID-19 vaccination is available to children aged 6 months and older to give them protection against serious COVID-19 illness.

For people under 16, a parent or legal guardian must book their appointment and give consent for their vaccination.

## How to get your child vaccinated

There are different ways to get your child vaccinated, depending on their age.

For children age 6 months to 11 years, you can:

- book a vaccination centre appointment (Link: <https://covid19booster.healthservice.ie/hse-self-referral/?flow=booster>)
- go to a walk-in clinic (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/find-a-covid-19-vaccination-centre/>) - when they are open

Children under 12 must go to a vaccination centre for their vaccine. This is because children under 12 are given a vaccine with a smaller dose.

If your child is 12 or older, you can:

- book an appointment with a participating pharmacy (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/services/pharmacies-covid-19/>)
- go to your GP, if they are offering COVID-19 vaccines

If you have any questions about where to get your child vaccinated, call HSELive for advice. Freephone: 1800 700 700 (Link: <tel:1800700700>)

## Recommended COVID-19 vaccines for children

Recommended COVID-19 vaccination for your child depends on:

- their age
- if they have a weak immune system
- if they are at higher risk from COVID-19

### ▼ Children age 6 months to 4 years

For children age 6 months to 4 years:

- the first round of vaccination is 3 doses
- the second dose is given 3 weeks after the first
- the third dose is given 8 weeks after the second dose
- a booster dose is not recommended

Children age 6 months to 4 years are offered a smaller dose of a Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine than children age 5 to 11. The immunity they get will be similar to the higher dose vaccine used in older age groups.

### How the vaccine is given

For babies age 6 to 12 months, the vaccine is given as an injection into the thigh.

For children age 1 to 4, the vaccine is given as an injection into the thigh or upper arm.

### ▼ Children age 5 to 11

Children age 5 to 11 will need 2 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for the best possible protection against COVID-19. They will get their second dose 8 weeks after the first dose.

They are offered a smaller dose of a Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine than people age 12 and older. The immunity they get will be similar to the higher dose vaccine used in older age groups.

## Booster dose

A booster dose is not recommended unless your child has:

- a weak immune system
- a condition that puts them at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness

## How the vaccine is given

The vaccine is given as an injection into the upper arm.

### ▼ Children age 12 to 17

For children age 12 and older the first round of vaccination is 2 doses, 8 weeks apart.

Children age 12 to 17 will need 2 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for the best possible protection against COVID-19. They will get their second dose 8 weeks after the first dose.

A booster dose is:

- available to anyone age 12 or older
- recommended if your child has a weak immune system
- recommended if your child has a condition that puts them at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness

They can get a first booster dose 4 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.

## How the vaccine is given

The vaccine is given as an injection into the upper arm.

If your child recently turned 12, they should go to a clinic for people age 12 and older. Do this even if they turned 12 after their first dose.

### ▼ Children with a weak immune system

If your child age 5 or older has a weak immune system (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/weak-immune-system/>), they should get their:

- second dose 4 weeks after their first dose
- additional dose 8 weeks after their second dose
- first booster 4 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection
- spring and autumn boosters 6 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection

### ▼ Children at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness

If your child aged 12 or older has a medical condition that puts them at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/people-at-higher-risk/overview/#conditions-that-put-you-at-higher-risk>), they can get their:

- first booster 4 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection
- autumn booster at least 9 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection

If your child aged 5 to 11 has a medical condition that puts them at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness, they can get:

- an autumn booster at least 9 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection

## When to delay vaccine

If your child has recently had the Mpox vaccine (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/monkeypox/vaccine/>), wait 4 weeks before they get their COVID-19 vaccine. This is a precaution because of the unknown risk of myocarditis.

## If your child is getting other vaccines

For children under 4 years, prioritise your child's routine childhood vaccines (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/babies-children/vaccines-your-child/>) over their COVID-19 vaccination.

Children aged 6 months to 4 years should wait 14 days after getting another vaccine before getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

## If your child has COVID-19

Delay getting your child vaccinated if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive COVID-19 test result.

### ▼ 6 months to 4 years

#### Dose 1

For dose 1, they can be vaccinated at least 4 weeks after they first develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. But it is recommended to wait 6 months, so the vaccine is most effective.

#### Dose 2

For dose 2, they can be vaccinated at least 4 weeks after they first develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.

#### Dose 3

If your child is due dose 3 and had a COVID-19 infection more than 7 days after the second dose, they do not need a third dose.

If they had a COVID infection within 7 days of their second dose, they should wait 8 weeks before getting their third dose.

### ▼ 5 years and older

#### Dose 1

For dose 1, they can be vaccinated at least 4 weeks after they first develop symptoms or from their positive COVID-19 test.

#### Dose 2

For dose 2, they can be vaccinated at least 8 weeks after they first develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.

There is different advice:

- if your child has a weak immune system and needs an additional dose (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/weak-immune-system/#additional-dose>)
- if your child is due a booster dose (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-booster-dose/>)

When your child should not get a COVID-19 vaccine (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccination-for-children/#children-who-should-not-get-a-covid-19-vaccine>)

## Giving consent for vaccination

Anyone under 16 must attend their vaccination with a parent or legal guardian.

A parent or legal guardian must be there in person to give consent. You need to give consent for each dose.

The child getting the vaccine will also be asked if they want to get the vaccine at their appointment.

The vaccinator can answer questions you might have about the vaccine.

If it's not possible for a parent or legal guardian to be at the appointment, freephone HSELive for advice: 1800 700 700 (Link: <tel:1800700700>).

If parents do not agree on vaccination (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccination-for-children/#different-views-between-parents>)

### ▼ If your child is an international student in Ireland

Children from outside Ireland who are visiting or studying in Ireland can be vaccinated in Ireland.

The child's parent or legal guardian will need to give their consent for vaccination.

If it's not possible for a parent or legal guardian to be at the appointment, freephone HSELive for advice: 1800 700 700 (Link: <tel:1800700700>)

From outside Ireland: 00 353 1 240 8787 (Link: <tel:0035312408787>)

Translated COVID-19 vaccine information (Link: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/covid-19-resources-and-translations/translated-covid19-information/>)

## Registering your child

You can register your child at their appointment. This must be done by a parent or legal guardian. You will need to bring their PPS number with you. You only need to do this for dose 1.

Your first appointment will be a few minutes longer but you do not need to arrive earlier.

## Children with additional needs

Some children getting their vaccine may need:

- more time at their appointment
- a quieter appointment time with fewer people

If your child has additional needs, call HSELive to arrange one of these options.

Freephone: 1800 700 700 (Link: <tel:1800700700>)

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## More in [Getting your COVID-19 vaccine](#) (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/>)

### Where to get vaccinated

About COVID-19 vaccination (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/about-covid-19-vaccination/>)

Booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-booster-dose/>)

Find a pharmacy giving COVID-19 vaccines (Link: <https://www2.hse.ie/services/pharmacies-covid-19/>)

### Children

[How to get a COVID-19 vaccine for children](#)

Deciding on COVID-19 vaccination for children (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/covid-19-vaccination-for-children/>)

Walk-in clinics for children (Link: </services/covid-19-vaccination-centres/>)

### Weak immune system

Weak immune system and COVID-19 vaccines (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/weak-immune-system/>)

### Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility: COVID-19 vaccination (Link: </screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/pregnancy/>)