



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
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Commissioner

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CHILDREN AGES 5 TO 11 NOW ELIGIBLE FOR COVID-19 VACCINE BOOSTERS

NYC children 5-11 who had the second dose of the vaccine at least five months ago should start receiving the Pfizer booster. Visit nyc.gov/vaccinefinder or call 877-VAX4NYC for a site.

Unvaccinated children should start the COVID-19 vaccine primary series now

Health Department reminds parents and caregivers to maintain routine childhood vaccinations

May 23, 2022 — The Health Department today announced that the Pfizer [COVID-19 vaccine](#) boosters for children ages 5 to 11 is widely available in New York City. Health Department vaccination sites, pharmacies, community health centers, hospitals, and City-run clinics will be providing no-cost COVID-19 vaccines. Availability of boosters for 5- to 11-year-olds at different sites will be posted and updated over the coming days. Visit nyc.gov/vaccinefinder or call 877-VAX4NYC to find a location.

“Vaccines and boosters are our best line of defense against COVID-19, and making them available to New Yorkers ages 5-11 will help keep our kids safe and healthy as we continue to battle this virus,” said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. “We continue to encourage all eligible New Yorkers to get vaccinated, to get boosted, and mask up when possible.”

“As a parent, I am looking forward to getting my own eligible children a booster,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan**. “Boosters help build stronger immunity, which will keep our kids safe, confident, and healthy in the months ahead.”

The CDC recommends the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine booster for children ages 5 to 11 who had the second dose at least five months ago. The recommendation was made after an evaluation of the vaccine’s safety and strength of the immune response by the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the FDA. The booster dose is the same strength as the first two shots. During clinical trials of the booster dose for 5- to 11-year-olds, the most commonly reported side effects were pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, as well as fatigue, headache, and muscle pain. Immunocompromised children ages 5 to 11 should receive a three dose primary series followed by a booster at least three months later.

CDC also updated its recommendations for second boosters. Adults 50 and older and immunocompromised people 12 and older should get another booster at least four months after their first boosters. This strengthened recommendation is a response to the substantial increase in cases and hospitalizations among older Americans over the past few weeks.

The COVID-19 vaccine significantly reduces the risk of severe illness, hospitalizations, and death from the COVID-19. In New York City, 47% of children ages 5 to 12 are fully vaccinated, compared to 80% of children ages 13 to 17, and 88% of adults. Unvaccinated people continue to have higher rates of hospitalization, so it is especially important for 5- to 12-year-olds to get vaccinated.

Boosters help keep immunity up to date. During the Omicron wave, according to the CDC, the two-dose [vaccine effectiveness](#) against infection declined in both children ages 5 to 11 years and adolescents ages 12 to 15 years. A booster dose in adolescents significantly improved vaccine effectiveness against infection, emergency department and urgent care visits. Further, [evidence among adults](#) shows that a booster dose improves protection.

COVID-19 vaccines are available at hospitals, clinics, and community health centers across the city. Chain pharmacies, like CVS, Rite Aid, Walgreens and Duane Reade, and many independent pharmacies offer vaccination. Check with your local pharmacy to confirm if they are providing the vaccines and if they vaccinate children and the age range they can serve. You may also check with your regular health care provider. COVID-19 vaccines are available at no cost and regardless of immigration status.

New York City is now on High Alert, as COVID-19 is increasing. In addition to staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines, New Yorkers should:

- **Wear a face mask in all public indoor settings and crowded outdoor settings.** Upgrade to higher-quality masks, including KN95, KF94, N95, or a cloth mask on top of a surgical mask. Higher-quality masks will most benefit people who are at high risk of severe illness, are over 65 or are unvaccinated.
- **Consider avoiding higher-risk activities.** Do not go to crowded, indoor gatherings. Limit any type of gathering to a small number of people.
- **Get tested.** Testing is especially important if you have COVID-19 symptoms or were recently in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. You should also get tested before and after traveling or getting together with others.
- **Stay home if sick or recently exposed.** Follow all isolation and quarantine guidance, including wearing a face mask. COVID-19 is highly contagious. You can spread COVID-19 even if you do not have symptoms.
- **Wash your hands.** Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer.

The Health Department is also reminding parents and caregivers to make sure children are up to date on routine vaccines, including like the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR), DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis), Hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), Polio, Pneumococcal (PCV), Varicella, Tdap, Quadrivalent Meningococcal (MenACWY) and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines in accordance with the [ACIP routine immunization schedule](#). COVID-19 vaccines and routine vaccines can be given at the same time.

Parents and caregivers should check with their child's health care provider about what immunizations are due and to make an appointment. New Yorkers unable to make an

appointment with their child's provider or those who need to find a provider can get low- or no-cost immunizations at the Health Department's Fort Greene Health Center immunization clinic, regardless of immigration status. The clinic serves anyone 4 years or older; [appointments can be scheduled](#).

[Uninsured and underinsured children](#) can also get immunization services at other locations for a sliding scale fee. Appointments can also be made at [NYC Health & Hospital facilities](#) or by calling 1-844-NYC-4NYC. New Yorkers can also find a [list of Community Health Centers](#).

To find a health care provider or for other locations throughout NYC that provide vaccination services for children and adults, **call 311**.

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