

Getting Vaccinated for COVID-19: Youth 12-17 years old

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Pfizer-BioNTech is the only vaccine authorized for youth age 12-17. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for emergency use and found it to be highly effective with no serious safety concerns. This vaccine requires two doses, given three weeks apart. When possible, the second dose should be given at the same vaccination site as your first dose. To find out where you can get the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, visit: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines> or call 1-888-445-4111.

Permission from a parent or guardian is required for youth age 12-17.

- Parents or guardians can give permission in two ways:
 1. By phone with a witness listening on the phone line, as arranged by the vaccination site
 2. By written consent on paper or electronically.
- Each vaccination site has a consent form. Follow the instructions for submitting the form provided by the vaccination site.
- Some individuals under age 18 may give their own consent for vaccination. For more information, please visit: <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines/public-faq>.
- It is recommended, but not required, that a parent or guardian be present during vaccination. For youth where DHHS is the legal guardian, the youth must be accompanied by a caseworker or resource parent, except at school-based vaccination clinics, where it is recommended, but not required, for a resource parent or caseworker to be present.
- If possible, youth should bring a form of identification to their appointment. If no documentation is available, parents or guardians can attest to the youth's eligibility to receive the vaccine.



The vaccine is provided at no cost. The federal government will cover the cost of your vaccine. You should not be charged or billed, but your provider may ask you for your insurance information so that they can bill for administering the vaccine. Your provider should also not charge you for an office visit if you go in only to get the vaccine.



Free transportation is available. Mainers who do not have reliable access to transportation may get a ride to their vaccination appointment at no cost, including youth age 12-17. The vaccine appointment must be scheduled first, and then you can reserve a ride by calling 1-855-608-5172 (Monday through Saturday, 7:00am to 4pm) **at least 48 hours before** the appointment. The transportation provider will need to know in advance if a parent or guardian will be going to the appointment. To use this transportation service, youth age 12-15 **must** be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian except when the parent/legal guardian provides a signed consent form authorizing transportation for the unaccompanied minor. Parents or guardians are **not** required to accompany youth ages 16 and 17 on their ride. This transportation service is not available for drive-thru clinics.

What vaccines are currently authorized for youth age 12-17?

Currently, **only** the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has been authorized for emergency use by the FDA for people age 12-17.

The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen vaccines are not yet authorized for individuals under age 18, but they are being studied for future approval.

Who should get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent getting COVID-19. It is your choice to get the vaccine. If you decide to get it, you should tell your vaccine provider if you:

- Have a history of severe allergic reactions
- Have a fever
- Have a bleeding disorder or take blood thinners
- Are immunocompromised or are on a medicine that affects your immune system
- Are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are lactating
- Have received another COVID-19 vaccine

You should talk to your provider if you have had a serious allergic reaction to the first dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine or to any ingredient in the vaccine before getting the second dose.

What is in the COVID-19 vaccine?

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine contains the active ingredient of messenger RNA (mRNA) along with fat, salts, and sugars to protect the active part of the vaccine and help it work better in the body. It does not contain live COVID-19 virus, or other preservatives or substances. You cannot get COVID-19 from getting the vaccine.

What happens after I get vaccinated?

You will need to wait 15 to 30 minutes before leaving the vaccine site so your vaccine provider can help you if you do have an allergic reaction or other side effects. While you wait, you can sign up for v-safe to report any side effects and get a reminder for your second dose: v-safe.cdc.gov.

It is common to have side effects one to three days after getting the vaccine. Common side effects are tiredness, muscle pain, pain in the arm where you got your shot, fever, headache, joint pain, chills, nausea, or vomiting. These are signs the vaccine is working. If your symptoms don't go away within three to four days, contact your doctor or clinic. You or your vaccine provider can also report side effects to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS): vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html.

Call 911 if you have an allergic reaction after leaving the clinic. Signs of an allergic reaction may include difficulty breathing, swelling of your face and throat, fast heartbeat, a bad rash all over your body, dizziness, and weakness.

Be sure to make an appointment for your second dose. You'll need to come back in three weeks to get your second dose.

After you get the vaccine, keep wearing your mask, stay six feet (two meters) apart, and avoid gatherings to protect those who are not yet vaccinated. It will take two weeks after you have received your second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to get full protection from COVID-19.

Visit www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines for more information.

You can also call the COVID-19 Community Vaccination line at: 1-888-445-4111.