

# Consent form for COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5 to 11

Child's Full Name:	
Date of birth:	
Phone contact number:	
email:	
Medicare Number:	
Sex:	

## About COVID-19 vaccination

The Comirnaty (Pfizer) COVID-19 vaccine can prevent children from becoming ill from COVID-19. The vaccine schedule for children is 2 doses, given 8 weeks apart. This interval can be shortened in special circumstances to a minimum of 3 weeks.

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine does not contain any live virus and cannot cause COVID-19. It contains the genetic code for an important part of the SARS-CoV-2 virus called the spike protein. After getting the vaccine, your child's body makes copies of the spike protein. Your child's immune system will then learn to recognise and fight against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19. The body breaks down the genetic code quickly.

Vaccination is voluntary and free. You can discuss any concerns or questions you have about COVID-19 vaccination for your child with your immunisation provider or your GP before they receive the vaccine.

## Safety of the vaccine

The safety of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has been tested in more than 3,500 children aged 5 to 11 years in the clinical trial and a safety expansion group. The trial showed that the vaccine is safe in children and most side effects were mild.

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years is a smaller dose (one third of the active component of the vaccine) than the vaccine for people aged 12 years and over.

Expected side effects in the first one to two days after vaccination are less common in children than in teenagers and young adults. The most common side effects include a sore arm, headache and fatigue. These usually go away on their own or are treated with over the counter medication like paracetamol or ibuprofen. Children don't usually need to see a doctor for these mild side effects after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has a very rare risk of heart inflammation (called myocarditis or pericarditis). Myocarditis and/or pericarditis occurs very rarely in younger people, including adolescents and children 12 years of age and older, who have had the Pfizer Comirnaty vaccine or the Moderna Spikevax vaccine. It is more common after dose 2 and in males.

## Who should not receive this vaccine?

Your child should not receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine if they have had:

- anaphylaxis (a type of severe allergic reaction) to a previous dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine
- anaphylaxis after exposure to any component of the vaccine, including polyethylene glycol (PEG)
- any other serious adverse event that an experienced immunisation provider or medical specialist has confirmed was caused by a previous dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, without another cause identified.

## Precautions for vaccination

Children with certain conditions may need additional precautions such as staying for 30 minutes of observation after having their vaccine or consulting an allergy specialist. Tell your immunisation provider if your child has had:

- an allergic reaction to a previous dose or to a component of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine
- anaphylaxis to other vaccines or to other medicines – your provider can check to ensure there are no common components with the COVID-19 vaccine your child is receiving
- confirmed mastocytosis with recurrent anaphylaxis that requires treatment.

Tell your immunisation provider if your child has a bleeding disorder or is taking a blood- thinning medication (anticoagulant). This will help them determine whether it is safe for your child to have an intramuscular injection and help decide the best timing for injection.

## What to expect after vaccination

As with any vaccine, your child may have some side effects after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

Common side effects after the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in children include:

- pain, redness or swelling at the injection site
- tiredness
- headache
- fever and chills.

Less common side effects after the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in children include:

- joint pain
- muscle pain
- vomiting.

These side effects are usually mild and go away within one or two days.

If your child experiences pain at the injection site or fever, headaches or body aches after vaccination, they can take paracetamol or ibuprofen. These help to reduce some of the above symptoms (paracetamol or ibuprofen does not need to be taken before vaccination). If there is swelling at the injection site, a cold compress can be applied.

Rare side effects reported after the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine include:

- severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis)
- myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle)
- pericarditis (inflammation of the outer lining of the heart).

You should seek medical attention after vaccination if your child has:

- symptoms of a severe allergic reaction, such as difficulty breathing, wheezing, a fast heartbeat, or if your child collapses
- chest pain, pressure or discomfort, irregular heartbeat, skipped beats or 'fluttering', fainting, shortness of breath, pain with breathing
- new or unexpected symptoms, or if you are worried about a potential side effect
- an expected side effect of the vaccine that has not gone away after a few days, like headache, fever or chills.

Vaccinated people can still get COVID-19. Even if they have no symptoms, or only mild symptoms, they could still pass the virus on to others. This is why it is important after vaccination to continue other preventative measures, such as:

- physical distancing
- hand washing
- wearing a face mask (depending on age)
- COVID-19 testing and quarantine/isolation as required by your state/territory.

If your child has been vaccinated, they should still get a COVID-19 test if they have symptoms that meet your local health authority's testing criteria.

## Special circumstances to discuss before vaccination

### Children with heart conditions

Children with a history of any of the following conditions can receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. You should seek advice, however, from a GP, immunisation specialist or cardiologist about the best timing of vaccination and whether any additional precautions are recommended.

- Recent (within the past 3 months) myocarditis or pericarditis (heart inflammation)
- Acute rheumatic fever (with active heart inflammation) or acute rheumatic heart disease
- Acute decompensated heart failure.

Tell your doctor if your child has had myocarditis or pericarditis diagnosed after a previous dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Children with weakened immune systems (immunocompromise)**

It is strongly recommended that children with immunocompromise receive COVID-19 vaccination. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is not a live vaccine. It is safe in children with immunocompromise.

Children with immunocompromise, including those living with HIV, have a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, including a higher risk of death.

Some children with immunocompromise may have a reduced immune response to the vaccine, so it is important to consider other preventative measures, such as physical distancing, after vaccination.

### **Children with a history of COVID-19**

If your child has had COVID-19 in the past, tell your doctor or immunisation provider. COVID-19 vaccination is still strongly recommended in children who have already had COVID-19 infection. COVID-19 vaccination can be given after recovery from the infection, or can be deferred for up to six months after the acute illness (confirmed with a COVID-19 test). This is because evidence suggests that past infection reduces the risk of reinfection for at least six months.

### **Children who have recently received another vaccine**

Children can safely receive other vaccines any time before, after or at the same time as their COVID-19 vaccine. If your child has recently received another vaccine (within the last 7 days), it is best to let your immunisation provider know so they can correctly assess any side effects.

### **Children who turn 12 before their second dose**

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years contains a smaller dose of the active vaccine component compared with the dose for people aged 12 years and over. It is important that your child gets the correct vaccine for their age. If they received their first dose when they were 11 years old, and had their 12th birthday before their second dose, it is safe for them to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for people aged 12 years and over for their second dose. This is also the usual practice for other types of vaccines where there are different dose strengths for different age groups

## **COVID-19 testing after vaccination**

Some side effects from COVID-19 vaccination might be similar to symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever). However, the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine does not contain any live virus and cannot cause COVID-19.

Your child may not need to get a COVID-19 test or isolate if:

- they develop general symptoms like fever, headache or tiredness in the first 2 days after vaccination
- you are sure that they don't have any respiratory symptoms (e.g. runny nose, cough, sore throat, loss of smell or loss of taste).

However, you should check the current guidelines in your state/territory for the most up-to-date information. This advice may change if there is a COVID-19 outbreak in your local area. Your child may need to get a COVID-19 test if they meet other criteria, e.g. if they are a close contact of a known COVID-19 case. If in doubt, seek medical assessment.

## **Remember your next appointment**

It is important that your child receives 2 doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, 8 weeks apart, for their primary course. The dosing interval can be shortened to a minimum of 3 weeks in certain situations, e.g. as part of a local outbreak response or before your child starts any immunosuppressive treatment. Your provider will advise if your child's second dose should be given earlier.

The second dose is likely to prolong the duration of protection against COVID-19. Unless there are special circumstances, it is better for your child to get their second dose 8 weeks after the first (rather than a shorter interval) because better immune responses are more likely after a longer interval.

## Consent for COVID-19 vaccination children aged 5 to 11 years

**Yes No (please mark as required)**

- Has your child recently been sick with a cough, sore throat or fever, or been feeling unwell in any way?
- Has your child had COVID-19 before?
- Has your child had a COVID-19 vaccination before?
- Has your child had a serious reaction to a vaccine or medication?
- Does your child have a weakened immune system (immunocompromise) or any immune disorders?
- Does your child have a bleeding disorder or other blood disorder, or take any medicine to thin their blood?
- Has your child ever had any problems with their heart?
- Are you a parent/guardian/substitute decision maker who has the authority to provide consent for vaccination on behalf of this child?

If you answered Yes to any of questions 1 to 7, your child may still be able to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, however you should talk to your child's GP, immunisation specialist or cardiologist first to discuss the best timing of vaccination and whether any additional precautions are needed

Please talk to your doctor if you have any questions or concerns before getting your COVID-19 vaccination.

## Consent to receive COVID-19 vaccine

I confirm that:

- I have received and understood information provided to me on COVID-19 vaccination for the child named above
- none of the above conditions apply to this child, or that I have discussed these conditions and any other special circumstances with my regular health care provider and/or vaccination provider
- I am the child's parent, guardian or substitute decision-maker
- I have the authority to provide consent for this child and I agree to the child named above receiving the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

Parent/guardian/substitute decision-maker's name:	
Parent/guardian/substitute decision maker's signature:	
Date:	