

Information on coronavirus vaccinations for the guardians of a child aged 5 to 11

The coronavirus disease is usually mild in children, but underlying diseases also increase the morbidity of children aged 5–11 who have been infected with coronavirus. Children may also experience prolonged symptoms associated with a coronavirus infection.

Coronavirus vaccinations are recommended for:

- **children aged 5–11 years who may have an increased risk of developing a serious coronavirus disease due to an underlying disease, treatment or other reason.**
- **children aged 5–11 who have a person with severe immunodeficiency close to them.**

Other children aged 5–11 are also offered the possibility to get coronavirus vaccinations.

Conditions that may expose people to a severe coronavirus disease include illnesses that severely weaken the function of the lungs and the heart or the body's immune system.

Your home municipality will provide information on the organisation and schedule of vaccinations for children aged 5–11.

Vaccinations provide good protection against the coronavirus disease. In addition, the vaccinations of children can provide a degree of protection to a person with severe immunodeficiency who are close to them.

The vaccination is voluntary and free of charge.

Coronavirus vaccine offered to children

Children aged 5–11 are offered Biontech-Pfizer's Comirnaty mRNA vaccine meant specifically for this age group. The vaccine has a conditional marketing authorisation for vaccination of children aged 5–11.

The vaccine is administered in two doses. The second dose is given 6 to 12 weeks after the first one.

The vaccines do not contain live viruses, which means that you cannot be infected with coronavirus by getting vaccinated.

Effectiveness and safety of vaccines

Studies that preceded the marketing authorisation concluded that the effectiveness of the vaccine against the coronavirus disease is excellent for the 5–11 age group.

After vaccinations, children aged 5–11 have shown similar symptoms as those aged 12 or over. The most common symptoms that have been noted after vaccinations include pain, swelling and redness at the injection site as well as fatigue, headache, chills, muscle pain and fever. All these symptoms are temporary and do not prevent further vaccination. Fever and pain medications may be used to treat the symptoms.

In studies prior to the marketing authorisation, no severe adverse effects were observed in children aged 5–11. Potential rare adverse effects could not be observed because of the limited number of people who were studied. Severe allergic reactions after vaccination have been very rare.

Several million children aged 5–11 have already been vaccinated around the world. No safety concerns specific to this age group have been observed.

Minors may decide on vaccination based on their age and level of development

In Finland, minors can decide on whether or not to be vaccinated if a health care professional considers the child capable of making such a decision based on their age and level of development. No specific age limit for independent decision-making has been set in legislation. For most children aged 5–11, the consent of their guardians is required.

Even if a minor does not decide on their vaccination, they are provided with information about the vaccination, taking into account their age and level of development, and their opinion on the matter must be heard.

If a child does not decide on their vaccination, the consent of all guardians is required for the vaccination.

More information on children's risk groups and the effectiveness and safety of vaccines can be found on this web page: thl.fi/coronavaccinationsforchildren