Children aged 12-17 can now get a COVID-19 vaccine in B.C. Here are some answers to common questions about COVID-19 vaccinations in children. More information is available on the BCCDC website at bccdc.ca/covid19vaccine.

Why should children get vaccinated?

When a child is vaccinated, they can be exposed to COVID-19 without getting sick. If they do get sick, it's usually not very serious. Most children aren't likely to get very sick from COVID-19, but some children will. Being vaccinated is the best way to protect children from COVID-19.

Having children vaccinated helps protect the people around them too, including those who might get very sick from COVID-19. If a child is vaccinated, they are much less likely to spread COVID-19.

The more people who are vaccinated in B.C., the harder it is for COVID-19 to spread. This helps protect everyone.

What vaccine will children get?

Children aged 12-17 will be offered the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. Health Canada recently approved this vaccine for people aged 12 and older. Clinical trials showed this vaccine is safe and effective for this age group.

Other vaccines may be offered if more vaccines are approved for children.

How do we know this vaccine is safe?

Health Canada has an extensive review and approval process. This ensures the safety and quality of vaccines. They determined the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is safe for people aged 12 and older. Learn more about vaccine safety.

Is getting a COVID-19 vaccine the right choice?

Having questions about vaccination is normal. Learn more about COVID-19 vaccines to help decide if vaccination is the right choice for you or your family. You can also call 8-1-1 or talk to a health care provider if you have questions.

Not all COVID-19 vaccine information is reliable. Learn how to find trusted information about vaccines.

Public health recommends all eligible people get a COVID-19 vaccine. This protects you and the people around you. COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be available in B.C. You don't have to decide right now if you're not sure.

Do children have to get vaccinated?

Getting vaccinated isn't mandatory. Nobody has to be vaccinated if they (or their parent/guardian who makes health decisions for them) don't want to be.

COVID-19 Vaccination Information
Children Aged 12-17

BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Do parents/guardians need to provide consent for their child to get vaccinated?

There is no set age in B.C. for when a child can provide consent on their own. To provide consent for getting a COVID-19 vaccine, the child must:

· be able to understand the benefits and risks of vaccination and,
· be able to make decisions about their own health.

The health care provider giving the vaccine then decides if the child can consent on their own.

Generally, children aged 12 and older are given the opportunity to consent to immunizations themselves. Learn more about informed consent and mature minor consent.

Where can children get vaccinated?

You can book COVID-19 vaccine appointments for children at the same clinics as adults.

How do children get vaccinated?

1. **Register.** Children (or their parent/caregiver) can register one of three ways:

· Online at gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated, available in 12 different languages
· By telephone through a provincial call centre (toll-free) at 1-833-838-2323. Available in 140 different languages.
· In person at the nearest Service BC location.

You will need to provide the child's personal health number. This is on their CareCard or on a BC Services Card/Drivers License. If you don't have the child's personal health number, call the provincial call centre.

You will also need to provide an e-mail or phone number so you can be contacted when it is time to book an appointment.

2. **Book or attend an appointment.**

Children can get vaccinated at their own appointment or by attending a family member's appointment. Learn more about appointments for children 12 to 17.

Trusted sources of information about COVID-19 vaccines

· BCCDC: Information on vaccine safety, getting a vaccine and FAQs
· Immunize BC: Reliable immunization information and helpful tools
· BC Government: Detailed information on how to get vaccinated in BC
· HealthLink BC: Information on COVID-19 vaccines, available in 13 languages