

## **Preparing for the COVID19 Vaccine for Children Ages 6 Months – 5 Years**

After long anticipation, we are preparing for the COVID19 vaccine to be approved for children ages 6 months – 5 years. Once the FDA grants Emergency Use Authorization, the ACIP and CDC will make final recommendations. It is at THIS point we can begin to vaccinate children ages 6 months to 5 years.

We will offer the COVID19 vaccine to all our patients ages 6 months and older. Please sign up for the COVID vaccine through MyChart. The sign-ups will be available as soon as the CDC makes its final recommendations.

### **Here are some answers to frequently asked questions:**

**How do I sign my child up for the COVID vaccine?** Please sign up through MyChart. Please do NOT call the office. We are inundated with calls, and we are doing our best to answer everyone in a timely fashion. We have been given the great task of vaccinating our patients while providing ongoing routine medical care while also taking care of our sick patients. We are doing our best to care for our patients while maintaining good cheer and thoughtful care.

**Can my child receive other vaccines at the same time as the COVID vaccine?** Yes! It is safe to give different vaccines at the same time. We encourage everyone to receive their routine immunizations at the same time they receive the COVID vaccine. COVID vaccines will be offered at all well visits for children ages 6 months and older.

### **Which COVID vaccine will my child receive at West Cambridge?**

We will give the Moderna vaccine to our patients ages 6 months – 5 years. This is a two-dose series given four weeks apart. If you would like the Pfizer vaccine for your child, you are welcome to find other locations.

For many questions you may have, we recommend a fantastic blog called Your Local Epidemiologist: <https://yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com>  
Much of our information below is directly from her website.

### **Is the vaccine safe?**

Yes. During clinical trials, side effects were minimal. For children ages 6 months – 23 months old, irritability (65% Moderna) and drowsiness (40% Moderna) were most common. For children 2-5 years old, injection site tenderness was the most common (60-70% Moderna), followed by fatigue.

For the Moderna vaccine, 1 in 4 children enrolled in the trial developed a fever. Side effects were more common after the second dose. No myocarditis cases were reported in this trial.

**Does the vaccine work?**

Yes. As described in Your Local Epidemiologist post, the trial found that antibody numbers were comparable to older age groups. Moderna reported 37-46% efficacy against COVID19 disease after 2 doses and 31-51% for 6-23 month olds. There will likely be a third dose eventually recommended of the Moderna vaccine.

**My child turns 5 years old soon. Should I wait for the vaccine until after they turn 5?**

No. We recommend you vaccinate your child as soon as they are eligible by age, and do not wait. Moderna's data showed consistent levels of neutralizing antibodies across age groups, despite the different doses of mRNA in the different vaccines.

**What if my child recently had COVID19 infection?**

Scientists are still trying to understand the durability of protection after infection. We recommend you vaccinate your child as soon as they are eligible for the vaccine.