

News & Comments

COVID Vaccines for Children Under 5

Tom Sebastian

In the past, younger children have not been able to get vaccinated against COVID-19. But now, CDC recommendations that infants as young as 6 months old be given COVID vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna have been unanimously endorsed by the FDA.

Children as young as six months of age are eligible for COVID vaccines that have been approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Food and Drug Administration. Pfizer-BioNTech's three-dose vaccine for children ages 6 months through 4 years and Moderna two-part vaccine for children ages 6 months through 5 years were approved for emergency use. Parents are encouraged to vaccinate all eligible children, including those who have already been vaccinated against COVID-19. Here's what to know about COVID-19 vaccines for children, including possible side effects and differences between the two approved vaccines.

Though the submitted results are still preliminary, both FDA and CDC said, that the vaccines are safe and effective. Dr Leslie Sude, a paediatrician at the Yale School of Medicine, said in a statement that, children get lower doses of the vaccines than adults but mount robust antibody responses with no safety concerns.

Pfizer's vaccine was given to more than 8 million children from 5-11 in December 2021, which reported common, mild side effects including sleepiness, irritability, fever, fatigue, and pain at injection sites. "Parents of younger children can be assured that the agency thoroughly evaluated the data on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines," FDA Commissioner Robert Califf said in a statement.

Several key differences exist between the two vaccines, including potential side effects and proven effectiveness.

Fever is the common side effect observed in the kids between 6 months to 5 years after each dose of the Moderna vaccine, which is less common in the Pfizer trial. Whereas, in the Moderna trial, 62% of kids 3-5 years old experienced fatigue, compared with just under 45% of children aged 2-4 years old in Pfizer's trial. Two doses of the Moderna vaccine are 51% effective, while Pfizer has reported its three-dose vaccine was 80% in preventing infection.

KEYWORDS

COVID, pandemic, vaccine, vaccination, Pfizer, Moderna, infants, preschoolers, CDC, FDA

